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CARL MARIA VON WEBER

CARL MARIA VON WEBER.

THE LIFE OF AN ARTIST.

From the German of his Son

BARON MAX MARIA VON WEBER.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

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The task which Baron Max Maria von Weber, the son of the great composer, the story of whose life is here told, undertook in preparing a complete biography of his father, was one of no ordinary difficulty. For many years he resisted the entreaties of his widowed mother to compose the work, from scruples which did honour to his heart and sense. On the one hand, he feared the accusation of a want of impartiality in writing of a father, whose memory he regarded with as much pride as affection: on the other, he felt a natural delicacy in treating a subject, many persons connected with which were still in existence, and more especially as regarded the great artist's troubled sphere of action in a country with which he himself was officially connected. His own scanty musical science he also considered an impediment in his way. But, in process of

time, as the memorials of his father, which he had been long collecting, gradually formed so considerable a portion of his daily thoughts and deeds, these scruples were in some degree modified, in some degree obliterated. Time, with all its political and social changes, had prepared the way for freedom of speech: rivalries and antipathies had been swept away from the stage of the world. For true impartiality he considered that he could trust to his own honesty of purpose. The feeling of his own deficiency in musical science vanished before newly conceived ideas of what the true tendency of such a biography ought to be. "Mendelssohn says somewhere in his letters," writes the author of the German work in his own preface, "that if any one could describe music with words, he himself would never write another note: and Weber also said to his friend Lichtenstein, 'I can write nothing about my works. Hear them played! In my music you will find myself.' In these remarks then lay the rule for the best treatment of the biography of an artist. Let him be known as man, when already loved and honoured in his works as artist." From any detailed criticism of the works of the great composer his son has, consequently,

abstained, upon the principle that words would convey but little meaning to those who did not know his music; whilst to those who did, many words were unnecessary. With this conviction he has principally endeavoured to relate the circumstances and events of the artist's life, and the feelings induced by them in his mind, as they stood in relation to the creations of his genius, and, in logical deduction, the reactive influence of those creations on the outward world around him. For the interest he excites he has relied upon a minute picture of the man, who as artist achieved so much and suffered so much. He has presented him as he lived, as he wandered and thought, as he laughed or wept, as he triumphed or despaired. He has invited his reader to sit by Weber's table, amidst his family and friends, to lean over his shoulder as he worked, to watch him playing with his children, or his dog and ape, to see him directing in his orchestra, to hear the beatings of his heart. He has presented the artist not so much with lyre in his hand and laurel-wreath upon his brow, as in his long coat, or his strange court attire — by turns the weary wanderer, the lover, the husband, and the court official.

Baron Max Maria von Weber has preferred to write his biography without that profusion of references, explanatory notes, and *pièces de justification*, with which such works are sometimes overladen. He has trusted to the implicit belief, on the part of the reader, in the truth of all his details. Materials for his work were amply supplied to him by notices in journals, pamphlets, and other works of the period, by the literary, musical, ecclesiastical, or govermental archives, which were every where opened to him with liberality, above all by the voluminous correspondence either addressed to Weber and his family, or proceeding from the composer's own pen. Much was necessarily to be derived from that diary, which Weber himself compiled, with scarcely any intermission, from the 26th of February 1810 up to within three days before his death; but not to the extent that may be supposed from such a term as "diary." Domestic details and accounts are to be found in it in profusion. But even the greatest events of his own life the composer mentions in this record in but brief and scanty lines. For the purpose of fixing dates, however, it appears to have been of considerable value. The re-

miniscences of contemporaries, whether given by writing or word of mouth, and even the family traditions of the household, the author appears to have used with singular but honest caution. He found that the stream of time had so much effaced the strongest impressions, as to leave the traces of memory confused and not altogether reliable. "I have even found events," he writes in his own preface, "sundered by a considerable lapse of time, laid before me as having happened at one and the same period." "I have not entirely excepted from this mistrust my own father's letters," he writes again, "when they were addressed to that beloved wife, to whom his life and fame were more dear than to himself, and who looked forward to every line from his hand with strong nervous excitement. Without one moment falsifying the truth, he naturally placed events in the light most pleasant to the woman whose happiness and peace of mind were so infinitely precious to him." With the personal appearance of the great composer his son has dealt with equal impartiality, deriving his descriptions from the best and most thoroughly reliable sources.

With such strict conscientiousness of in-

tention throughout his whole delicate work, the author has certainly earned himself every title to the implicit trust of his reader. In not one instance has he filled up gaps in events by drawing upon his own imagination, however likely to be correct. On the other hand, he has never been restrained by any partial feeling from laying bare blots in the character of the artist during the period of his youthful follies and excesses. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," seems to have been the author's maxim. "To have left the shadows of his errors out of my picture," he says himself, "would have been to have avowed, in coward spirit, that the lights in his character had not sufficient, and more than sufficient, brilliancy to throw the darker tints altogether into the background."

With Weber's painful position at the court of Saxony, his son, now a high government official in the same country, had necessarily to deal with a certain degree of delicacy. But there is no doubt, at the same time, that he has painted with a bold and firm hand the period of his father's unmerited and humiliating treatment by a portion of the Saxon court.

Admirable as is Baron von Weber's biography of his father, on the compilation of which he has employed all his spare time during seven long years, it presents a far too voluminous form to be laid before an English public in its entirety. It has been necessary, consequently, to condense it throughout in its English garb, and even, in some portions, to reconstruct it. Frequently, when there occurred long biographical notices of artists of a secondary rank in Germany, and wholly unknown in England, with whom the great composer was thrown together, they have been wholly omitted. But it may conscientiously be asserted that nothing, either in event or feeling, connected with Weber's life, which in any way could interest an English reader, has been allowed to slip aside in the difficult process of condensation.

J. P. S.

LONDON, *January* 1865.

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PART I.

WEBER'S EARLY YEARS.

1786—1812.

CHAPTER I.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER'S FAMILY—HIS BIRTH.

It has frequently been remarked, in the annals of the History of Art, that artistic genius of the very highest order has needed the development of generations to blossom and bear fruit in all its complete maturity. It has even been asserted, that no great genius has appeared in any one celebrated artist without having gradually culminated through a line of forefathers, who had distinguished themselves in the cultivation of the same branch of art, or at least given proof of the love with which they cherished it.

Be that as it may, a singular example of this process of development, by which the love of some especial art in ancestors has sown the seeds for the future eminence of a chosen individual of their posterity, gradually tended the growing plant, and cultivated it into greatness, may be found in the history of Carl Maria von Weber's family. The example is all the more striking as the direction taken by the love of Art in each generation was twofold. The devotion to music, constantly displayed by the great composer's forefathers, was almost invariably accom-

panied by a passion, verging on mania, for the stage; and indeed every thing connected with the theatrical world—a passion which led many of them to commit the strangest actions, and to sacrifice position, fortune, all, in obedience to its impulses. This union of dramatic with musical genius was developed, in all its completeness, in the subject of this memoir—the man in whom all the family talent culminated; and it is to this combination that his theatrical compositions may be said to have materially owed their profound originality and powerful dramatic effect.

The first of Carl Maria von Weber's family, of whom official record appears, was a certain Johann Baptista Weber, born about the year 1550, whose estates in Upper Austria were greatly increased by imperial bounty, in return for his eminent services to the Catholic cause during the Thirty Years' War; and who finally was rewarded for his notable exertions by a patent of nobility, as a Freiherr or Baron. The chief portion of his property, with the title, descended to his brother, Joseph Franz Weber, of whom family tradition, even at this early period, records that his love for theatrical exhibitions, as well as music, induced him to erect a small theatre and concert-room upon his own estate. During the general confusion of affairs consequent upon the Thirty Years' War, and the wars of the Spanish and Austrian Succession, little or no record exists of the Weber family. It is only evident, that, during these troublous times, their property was lost to them: and, about the year 1740, the remaining branch of the

family is to be found in the service of some of those minor potentates, with whom Germany at that time swarmed. A Fridolin von Weber is then mentioned as steward to the noble family of Schönau-Zella. Of the two sons of this Fridolin, the elder became the father of Constanze von Weber, the wife of the great Mozart, and of three other daughters, all more or less distinguished as professional singers. The younger, Franz Anton, was destined to be the father of Carl Maria von Weber, the two celebrated composers being thus cousins by marriage.

Both these brothers appear to have been inspired by the spirit of music, or rather possessed by it, like a mocking demon, which, by its fascination, was ever leading them astray upon their troubled path of life. Their extraordinary talent, as instrumental executants, as well as singers, when still very young, reached the ears of Karl Theodor, the Elector of the Palatinate; and this prince invited them both to Manheim, where he had established that celebrated opera troop and orchestra, which were probably, at that period, unequalled in the world. The elder brother seems to have relinquished the stage at an early period. He is subsequently mentioned as Privy Counsellor and District Judge to the Electorate. The position of his daughters fully shows, however, that his operatic and theatrical tastes were never quenched, and were transmitted to his children.

The fortunes of Franz Anton, the father of the great composer, were far more chequered. Endowed with an eminently handsome person, reckless in

spirit, and jovial in manner, he was eager to adopt a military career; and a commission was bestowed upon him as ensign in the Elector's guard, but upon the seemingly inconsistent condition, that he should not withdraw his services from the operatic stage of Manheim. This anomalous position was apparently not satisfactory to his restless disposition, however; and, having risen in favour with the Commander of the forces of the Electorate, General Baron von Weichs, he flung aside opera scores and instrument, and followed his new protector to the imperial army. During the ensuing campaign he not only became the idol of his squadron by his inexhaustible joviality of spirit, but was distinguished by his valour. After the battle of Rossbach, where he was wounded, however, his unsettled disposition again betrayed itself. He left the military service, and, by the earnest recommendation of his patron, Baron von Weichs, who had learned to entertain a fatherly affection for him, he entered the civil service of Clemens August, Elector of Cologne, and Bishop of Hildesheim. This change of destination determined one of the most important events of his life. In the house of the chief of his department, Court Financial Counsellor von Fumetti, the handsome young Lieutenant engaged the affections of the beautiful Maria Anna von Fumetti, the daughter. Whether the father had the proverbially flinty heart is not very apparent. But it was not until after the death of the old Counsellor, that the loving couple were united, and Franz Anton von Weber succeeded to the not inconsiderable

fortune and lucrative appointment of his beloved's father. His position was now a brilliant one. But the monotony of business routine evidently soon disgusted his ever-lively temperament. His passion for music again burst forth; and it was indulged to such a pitch of fanaticism, that he was to be seen at all times, fiddling in public places, as he marched at the head of his numerous progeny; or working with his bow in the fields, to the amusement or derision of his fellow citizens; and the office-papers soon lay in dusty confusion. This state of things could not last. His easy patron Clemens August died: and with his successor, the Prince Bishop Friedrich Wilhelm, the wild, reckless, restless worshipper of art found no favour. He was obliged to retire from his place with a pension; but, until the year 1773, he still dwelt at Hildesheim, occupied solely with his beloved art, and the education of the elder branches of his numerous family. The hope of placing before the world one of his children as a musical wonder of the age, was his principal mania; but strict and almost exclusive as the musical education of his children was, the desired miracle was not vouchsafed him—not as yet.

This life could not long satisfy the yearnings of the ambitious and unstable Franz Anton von Weber. A more artistic and livelier sphere of activity became more and more necessary to his restless spirit. A consciousness—an overweening conviction, perhaps—of his own superior artistic merits was always whispering temptingly in his willing ear. The tra-

ditional family demon was strong at his heart; and, yielding at last to its influence, he flung all other considerations to the wind, and dragged his whole family upon the stage.

For some years there exists no record of the fortunes of this strange family troop of comedians, singers, and instrumentalists. It appears probable that the family name was changed during the whole of this period, in obedience to the desire of the proud Maria Anna von Fumetti, who, as is known, combated her husband's design with all her energies, but combated in vain. The poor struggling woman seems to have broken her heart under the burden of a life which to her appeared a constant degradation. She died, after a long period of suffering, in 1783, not having yet attained her forty-seventh year. In the same year the name of Franz Anton von Weber —as though he had been released from a bond which weighed heavily upon his vainglorious spirit —again appears in the face of the world. He then figures as musical director of the Lubeck Theatre. The fortune brought him by his beautiful and once-happy wife was nearly squandered: he lived with his family in humble circumstances. His restlessness was still unquenched. Now he is mentioned as conductor of the orchestra of the Prince Bishop of Cutin; now, again, he expresses his discontent and dissatisfaction with his position, and resolves once more to appear upon the stage. A notable change in his life, however, was before him.

Always possessed by the desire of developing an

extraordinary musical genius in his children, he travelled, in the year 1784, to Vienna, in order to place his two elder sons as pupils with the then aged composer, Joseph Haydn. A home for these children was found in a family of the name of Von Brenner; and here the amorous Franz Anton von Weber, although now at the age of fifty, fell violently in love with Genofeva, the daughter of the house, a mild, fair, pretty girl of sixteen years. By what magic the middle-aged and needy musician won the maiden's heart, and, still more, the consent of the father, is not apparent. The scarcely well-assorted pair were married on the 20th August 1785; and, shortly afterwards, Franz Anton von Weber took back his young and lovely bride to his only home at Cutin. His appointment as musical director of the Prince Bishop had been relinquished; but as Stadt Musikus, or salaried and privileged leader of all the music of the town on festive occasions, he still contrived to obtain a scanty subsistence. That the pride of the ambitious artist was deeply wounded by his position, as well as his vanity mortified, may be well understood; nor can it be a matter of surprise that his temper should have been soured by need, and that his children by his first wife should have been occasionally harshly treated. But the saddest sorrow of this sad time of his life arose from the deep melancholy of his young bride. Many reasons may be surmised for her excessive lowness of spirits; by her family it was attributed to that longing for a lost home, which is admitted as a disease under the name

of *Heimweh*. It was under these unhappy circumstances, and when the "wolf was at the door," that on one cold wintry night in 1786, the melancholy Genofeva brought a son into the world, who received at the baptismal font the names of "Carl Maria Friedrich Ernst." The father knew not then that the ambition of his life had been accomplished, and that, if not a wonder-child, at all events a future genius, had been born to him.

Franz Anton's love of show was evidenced in the exercise of all his influence to obtain the widow of his old patron Duke Friedrich August, and Prince Carl of Hesse, then Statholder of Schleswig and Holstein, as godmother and godfather to his newly born son. Both of these illustrious personages consented to appear by proxy.

Strange to say, a considerable confusion exists in the precise date of Carl Maria von Weber's birth. The parish registers of Cutin have entered the baptism of the child as taking place on the 20th November 1786. But the father's own hand has recorded, in unmistakable figures, the birth of his son on the 18th December 1786; and, from the circumstance that the anniversary was invariably celebrated, as well by the family, as by Carl Maria von Weber himself, in after years, on this latter date, and, at the same time, from certain other textual irregularities in the church register, it may reasonably be inferred that a mistake of carelessness occurred in the official entry of the day of baptism, and that the 18th December was Weber's genuine birthday.

The child was yet an infant, when the family demon, roused probably by a series of operatic performances, which were given at the Episcopal Court of Cutin, again seized on Franz Anton's heart. Once more he grew drunk with the smell of oil-lamps, size, and carpentry—once more his senses were dazzled by the dingy glitter of stage-lights—once more the flattering thunder of applause deafened his better reason; his blood was again fevered by the poison of the stage. Spite of the tears of his poor young submissive wife, who shrank timidly from a course of life which had broken Anna von Fumetti's heart—spite of the entreaties and expostulations of his daughters, whose proved talent for the stage, however, may have entered largely into their father's decision—he again took up the wanderer's staff and set forth upon that troubled journey in search of theatrical fame, which he never ceased thenceforth restlessly to pursue until nigh on eighty years of age. With the three grown-up daughters and the one son, who still remained by his side, he started once more to tempt fortune on the operatic, or, if circumstances so willed it, the dramatic stage.

The baby Carl Maria was carried by his quiet suffering mother in the train of the wandering troop. For some years Franz Anton, with his children, pursued this strolling life; and from the year 1787 to the year 1792, records may be found at Cassel, Meiningen, Nuremberg, and other towns, telling of the performances of the well-known "Weber's Company of Comedians."

CHAPTER II.

AN ARTIST'S CHILDHOOD.

In an old album of a certain Elise Vigitill was found the first known writing, in childish trembling characters, of that hand, which afterwards so clearly and firmly traced the scores of "Oberon" and "Der Freischütz." "Dearest Elise," run the simple words, "always love your sincere friend Carl von Weber; in the sixth year of his age; Nuremberg, the 10th September 1792." At that time the little Carl Maria was a weak sickly child, suffering from a disease of the thighbone, which left traces in after life. He was the darling treasure of his poor mother, whose failing health, listless melancholy, and household cares, kept her a constant prisoner in that dingy Nuremberg lodging. A happy child, except in the fond affection of that pale mild woman, he cannot have been. The maniacal ambition of his father to find at once in his last-born the fulfilment of his oft-deceived hopes, and give a wonder-child to the world, vainly endeavoured to force that slowly developing intellect. The child shrank in nervous irritation,

amounting to disgust, from the ceaseless musical experiments, which were tried with the hope of working a miracle.

It is strange that, with his brain overtaxed, his nervous temperament painfully harassed, and his constitutional reserve shrivelled into shyness by his inability, from constant pain and suffering, to mix in the companionship of other children in his earlier years, the spirit of Carl Maria von Weber should have ever developed itself into that gay, elastic, at times jovial nature, which rendered him so popular with his friends in later youth. As yet the poor boy turned away with loathing from the rich banquet of art which he was expected to devour greedily. Franz Anton groaned in despair at his seeming lack of all talent; and his half brother Fridolin, who helped the father in this ill-digested musical education, once, as Weber himself was accustomed to relate in after life, tore the fiddle-bow from his little trembling hands, smote him with it several times over the knuckles, and angrily exclaimed, "Whatever may be made of you, Carl, it will never be a musician!" But Franz Anton fortunately had better patience: he could not yet relinquish his fond hope. The child's instruction was continued; whilst, amidst the wanderings of the Weber company, his plastic nature was receiving impressions which were never to be effaced.

The boy knew but little of the play-grounds of other children of his age—the house-stairs, the street, the garden, the meadow, or the wood—the scenes which often go so far to stamp a character. His

early games, it is true, as far as delicate health permitted, may have been such as those of other boys. But the arena, in which they took place, was widely different. As child of a theatrical manager, his playfellows were actors' children. His woods, his meadows, and his gardens, were daubed on canvas: a painted palace was his street. His boyhood's mimic fights were fought, not with sticks cut from the forest-bush, but with silvered swords and cardboard shields, with which the actors, as heroes or robbers, fought out their mimic fights upon the stage at night. It was not on the hill-side, beneath the air of heaven, that little Carl Maria stormed the imaginary fortress with his playmates. The stage represented the castle, which was to be defended against the assailants from the orchestra; and side-scenes and traps were the vantage points or pitfalls of the battle. Orchestra and stage arrangements were familiar to him before the first lessons of his primer—half understood theatrical intrigues his first glimpses of life. There is no doubt these first impressions of childhood exercised a powerful influence over his talent, and gave him that dramatic insight and knowledge of theatrical effect, which stood him in such good stead in his operatic compositions. But there lay in this daily communion with stage-life all the dangers arising from his contact with the laxity of morals, the little-mindedness, the want of true poetical feeling, which floated only too visibly on its surface. That the budding character of the child should have escaped this blight may be ascribed partly to that inborn in-

stinct which, throughout life, always urged him to wipe away the soil from the crystal; still more to the influence of that sweet, pure, simple-minded mother, who sheltered her beloved little one by her moral instruction from the evil tendencies of an existence, which to her refined nature was utterly uncongenial.

The mother's task was even still more delicate and difficult. She was obliged to shield her child from the contamination of his own father's example. The reckless joviality, which once sat so well on the handsome young officer, appeared coarseness and laxity in the more than middle-aged, but still active, manager, whose love of show and distinction had rendered him boastful and domineering, and whose dashing manners had now no more sterling ring in them than that of false stage-coin. That the whole theatrical life of his earlier years was utterly distasteful to the boy Carl's purer and more poetical nature, was evidenced in after days by Weber's strong repugnance to speak of the times when the family, under Franz Anton's direction, stood in a scarce higher position than that of strolling players. Still, however great his unwillingness to recall the memories of this period, he never failed to mention his father's name with affection and respect.

Although sheltered from harm beneath his mother's wing, and consoled in all his bitter sorrows by her tenderness, Franz Anton's intended wonder-child knew little rest. The fiddle-bow had struck no sparks of genius from the boy's knuckles: but, as idol on

some high pedestal in the temple of art, the father was resolved that this child should stand. Masters were found to teach him drawing, painting, engraving. In all the boy displayed ability; but in the exercise of none was the desired miracle worked. Franz Anton's eager and impatient temperament refused to have recourse to the only means which, by dry labour, and unremitting industry, might have fanned the latent spark into a flame. The desired wonder-child was expected to run before it could stagger on its toddling feet, to read with no knowledge of alphabet or grammar; in fact, to compose without due acquirement of the first principles of harmony, to paint pictures in oil before its fingers could trace the firm line with pencil upon paper, to engrave before its hand could grasp the tool with steadiness. It is surprising that the poor little plant, thus forced in the parental hotbed of education for the production of early fruit, ever recovered its healthful power. It is fortunate that the boy himself possessed that firmer will and better sense which, in the circumstances of after life, enabled him, while yet there was time, to transplant the poor weakly flower of genius, so nigh shrivelled to a mere weed of feeble dilettante-ism, into a better, sounder, healthier soil.

The circuit of the Weber company seems, at this period, to have been chiefly confined to the towns of Nuremberg and Erlangen. But, in 1796, the chances of the wandering players' life brought them to Hildburghausen. Here Franz Anton was com-

pelled to sever himself from his troop for a while. The health of poor melancholy Genofeva, always ailing, was now completely shattered. It was declared impossible for her to drag her feeble frame in the train of the wandering company. So at Hildburghausen Franz Anton remained with his fainting wife, his last-born boy, and his sister Adelheid, who had steadily and loyally accompanied her restless brother through all his wanderings. An excellent woman was this Adelheid, now in the years of her old maidenhood—a woman, whose character had been formed rather by the world's experiences than by education—but of noble heart and kindly spirit. In Hildburghausen, then, these members of the Weber family remained, with straitened means and in a humble lodging: and here Franz Anton made the acquaintance of Johann Peter Heuschkel, the conductor of the orchestra of the residing Duke Friedrich of Meiningen.

Heuschkel was still a very young man. His superior talent had early won for him the position he filled. He was amiable, lively, agreeable, but a strict and uncompromising zealot in the exercise of his art. The young musician was delighted with Carl Maria, whose joyous spirit began about this time to pierce the cloud that hung around him; and he begged to be allowed to give the boy instruction on the piano and in thorough-bass. His first task was to root out the weeds which grew rank in his young pupil's hastily acquired style. The boy's unsteady brilliancy, the result of the flourishing Franz

Anton's instruction, was checked at once. His rambling hands were bound down to the severest precision. He was made to tread the dry dusty road of thorough-bass, step by step, ploddingly and slowly, on that wearing and weary pilgrimage, which can alone lead to the true shrine of art; and many were the tears shed by the poor child on his ungenial and dreary path. But the affection he soon learned to entertain for his amiable young master supported him on his way; and, sooner than might have been expected, the child himself began to discover the power this severe discipline would place within his grasp. Franz Anton looked on astounded to see how a system of instruction, so repugnant to his own brilliant geniality, drew forth from his child blossoms of genius, which his own hothouse forcing had failed to warm into life. In after days Weber himself thankfully acknowledged that he owed all the real firm foundation of his clear and characteristic execution on the piano to his severe, zealous, and much-beloved young master, Heuschkel of Hildburghausen.

But scarcely had the boy Carl Maria begun to feel in the depths of his heart the truth and value of the advantages he thus enjoyed, when his father's restless spirit snatched them from him. Franz Anton's troop had arrived at Salzburg. Once more the manager's "soul was eager for the fray;" and, his poor Genofeva's strength being sufficiently restored to bear the fatigues of travel, to Salzburg he went, in the autumn of 1797, to undertake the personal direction of his theatrical company in that

town, previously to a projected excursion through Bavaria, Baden, and the Palatinate. But his plans were thwarted, and the advantages he expected nullified, by the tempest gathering, nearer and nearer, on the political horizon.

The revolutionary hurricane was sweeping up from the West. The incredible successes of the French Republican armies had filled the German Princes with anxiety and agitation. Moreau had already stood before Munich. The peace of Campo Formio could scarcely be said to have checked the progress of such an irresistible avalanche as the victorious Buonaparte. The storm-wind blew; and men bowed their heads before it. It is generally before the burst of any great political thunder-cloud that art lies prostrate. The cloud looks far blacker on the horizon than when driven up immediately overhead; and the same people, who have stood appalled and powerless at the distant rumbling of the cannon, and turned away their faces from the pleasures and solaces of life in their uneasiness, can afterwards dance, sing, and crowd the theatres, when the battle is raging at their very gates. And so it came that apprehension smote Franz Anton's theatrical speculation to the ground. He resolved to remain at Salzburg. Salzburg, however, offered no rich harvest for dramatic art. The cruel rigours of the late Archbishop had driven away in emigration 40,000 souls: the archbishopric still suffered from the loss of its best and freshest blood; and a curse for the misdeeds of his predecessor seemed to rest

on all the efforts of the severe Hieronymus Colleredo, whom destiny had marked out for the last of Salzburg's reigning ecclesiastics. The Archbishop, it is true, still entertained an orchestra and choir, which prevented musical art from dying out entirely in that dull abode. But the citizens of Salzburg seemed to have no heart for the more refined enjoyments of life: and the ill success of Franz Anton's theatrical management, which led eventually, it would seem, to the closing of the theatre, would probably have induced him to leave his profitless residence, had he not found a good opportunity for continuing the musical education of his little son. He had succeeded in placing the boy in the Archepiscopal Institute for young choristers.

The director and teacher of this establishment was a brother of the great composer Joseph Haydn. This Michel Haydn owed much of his reputation to the reflex thrown on him by his brother's brilliant name. Without being endowed with any great creative talent, he was nevertheless a learned and a sound musician. Although reserved in character, and rough in manner, and in this much affording a striking contrast to the bright, gay, animated nature of his illustrious brother, Michel Haydn, already sixty years of age, seems to have been so much attracted to the weakly limping little boy, whose pleasant wit and vivacity quickly won him the hearts of all his school-fellows, that he was induced to bestow every possible musical instruction on him without remuneration.

That it was a great piece of good fortune for the boy to receive instruction from so thoroughly solid a master, from a master, too, who had the advantage, fully felt by the worldly-minded Franz Anton, of bearing the name of Haydn, is indisputable. But the fresh spring of love for his art had been called up in the child's heart by his fondness for the sympathetic young master he had lost; and when he found himself led forward by the chill hand of the old man into the region of art, which Heuschkel had shown to him, as a sunny world bestrewn with flowers, and which now appeared to him no better than a dreary prison-chamber, full of mouldering books of notes, dust-covered instruments, and antiquated forms, the boy could but feel the cramping influence of the reaction. In a letter, however, written by little Carl Maria to his regretted young master, to wish him happiness on the approaching new year—the first letter extant of the illustrious composer—amidst all his expressions of affection and regret, he speaks only of his "luck" in getting instruction from a master "who no longer takes any pupils, because he has so much to do." That these lines, however, may possibly have been written under his father's supervision, may be deduced from the fact, that they were accompanied by a long letter from the ever-vainglorious Franz Anton, who begs to be addressed in return as "Major F. A. Baron von Weber." This persistence in being called "Major" by all his acquaintances in Salzburg was notoriously one of those incomprehensi-

ble vagaries in which the vanity of the old gentleman was accustomed to indulge.

The struggle in the child's mind, at this period of his musical education, was doubtless a severe one. On the one hand, he turned with repugnance from the skeleton of art, which was now presented to him, denuded of every form of loveliness; on the other, an inward consciousness once more whispered to him how important was the very study of this dry anatomy. When once left alone to direct his bark on the rough sea of harmony, like a young mariner, he could but acknowledge the blessing the previous study of his compass, his barometer, and his sextant had afforded him.

Meanwhile all was far from being peace within. Pecuniary troubles came thick upon the little family. Franz Anton, in the pressure of his needs, grew more and more rough in manner to those around him. The severe climate of the mountain-circled city fell a deadly blight on poor suffering Genofeva. Still more blighting to her loving heart were the wants of the family, and the temper of her husband. Consumption had set in; she felt that she was near her end. Her last and bitterest sorrow lay in the thought that the development of her boy's mind must be left in hands so little able to insure his future weal as those of the reckless Franz Anton. The anxious mother's heart was soon at rest, however. On the 13th March 1798, the poor sickly sorrowing Carl Maria knelt by the death-bed side, and held

for the last time the cold hand of his deeply beloved, sweet, beautiful, young mother.

Franz Anton's grief was violent and loud. It was sincere, however; for he could not but feel the blessing he had lost. But it was not long. Within a year, the old gentleman, who, spite his age, still exercised a strange fascination over women's hearts, was for the third time betrothed at Bamberg to a widow, by name Von Beer. The marriage, however, eventually never took place.

Carl Maria's heart seemed crushed at first. Fortunately he was not utterly deprived of the salutary effect of female influence. His noble aunt Adelheid was still by his side. She took the reins of the little orphan's education into her own sensible and practical hands; not only counteracting in the boy's mind the effect of Franz Anton's extravagant vagaries, and the possible contamination of the wild stroller's life, but blunting the child's dangerous tendency to sharp sarcasm with all her powers of control. To these latter efforts, probably, did Carl Maria von Weber owe the happy change which sweetened the instinctive bitterness of wit in the boy into the charming flow of humour, free from gall, that distinguished him in later years, and was justly said to have had the power of reconciling every enemy, whilst it enchanted every friend.

Meanwhile the real satisfaction of the boy, in the gradual conviction that he was slowly reaching the desired goal by his weary climbing in his dry studies, was more and more apparent. It was earnestly ex-

pressed in another letter, addressed, about the middle of 1798, to his former master Heuschkel.

In his labours he was urged on, frequently in the most injudicious manner, by his father, whose hopes to hail a great celebrity in his son were again aroused; and who began already to boast of his young prodigy in such terms that the blushes often mounted into the boy's cheeks, and his entreaties were stammered to be spared such painful eulogium. The first-fruits of the father's harvest shortly appeared in six short fugues of Carl Maria's composition; which, after meeting with the full approval of his master Michel Haydn, were duly published. They were dedicated to the boy's brother Edmund von Weber, then married and residing in Hesse Cassell. But even in this publication the influence of the boastful Franz Anton was only too apparent. In the dedication, which is dated "Salzburg, 1st September 1798," stand the words, "in the eleventh year of his age." A year had been taken, with obvious purpose, from the boy's real standing. He was then far advanced in his twelfth year. These little fugues were favourably mentioned by Rochlitz, the great musical critic of the day, to whom they had doubtless been sent by the ambitious father.

But with such gradual development of the boy's genius, Franz Anton could not be content. His darling world of art was on the stage alone. He burned to see his child's compositions produced at once upon the boards. The school of Michel Haydn could never lead to this result. Theatrical manage-

ment in Salzburg was more hopelessly swamped than ever in the advancing tide of war. So, towards the end of the year 1798, Franz Anton took his little family to Munich, with the evident intention of giving a dramatic tendency to the boy's talent, by his nearer contact with the influence to be derived from the operatic and dramatic excellence afforded by that capital.

At this period Munich was still sustaining a somewhat tarnished reputation as the cradle and the school of German opera. Carl Theodor of the Palatinate, when he had succeeded to his heritage of Bavaria, had brought with him from Manheim his admirable orchestra and troop of singers, headed by the great names of Vogler and Peter Winter as composers, and had issued an order that, for the future, no foreign performances should be permitted at his court. A genuine lover of art, he had resolved that Munich as his capital, although Bavaria was never favoured by his love, should be distinguished by all the splendour which a brilliant theatre, a faultless opera, and a general patronage of all the refinements of life could bestow upon it. But a change had come. His second marriage with Marie Leopoldine of Austria, combined with all the distresses of his ignominious flight into Saxony before the cannon of Jourdan and Moreau, and the shame of his vain efforts to stem the triumphs of the French revolutionary army, had transformed the liberal and spirited Carl Theodor into a gloomy devotee and a harsh ruler. Under the cruel blight of such agents of tyranny as the morose

Father Frank, and the savage Privy-Counsellor Lippert, the freedom of spirit, which could alone warm blossoms of art into life, was frozen to the ground. The tones of harmony were deafened by the dreaded rumbling of the wheels of Carl Theodor's spectral carriage, and the vain cries of the tortured in the Yellow Chamber. But the men of talent, who had flocked to Munich to bask in the sunshine of its golden period, were still there; and the theatre was still carried on with a certain degree of brilliancy. Peter Winter, the celebrated composer of "The Interrupted Sacrifice," was the conductor of the orchestra; and the amiable Franz Danzi, composer of many pretty little operas, was by his side. Both these men were lovers of true art, and still maintained sufficient authority to hold their banner proudly aloft.

It was not so much the fostering care of these two celebrities, however, that Franz Anton sought for his son, as that of two strange men of genius. One of these men, Joseph Grätz, who had pursued almost every profession during his chequered career, and lived through every phase of life, was one of the most celebrated musical theorists of his time. To him Franz Anton brought letters of recommendation. But Grätz loved money; and he heard no chink of solid coin in the old spendthrift's pocket. He declared he had too much to do already to take another pupil —perhaps he really had. The other singular individual was Evangelist Wallishauser, who during his triumphant operatic progress in Italy had taken unto himself the name of Valesi. For one and forty

years his beautiful tenor voice had been heard upon all the stages of civilised Europe. At Munich he had terminated his long operatic career. But he was considered the greatest teacher of singing of all time. Now, one of Franz Anton's few thoroughly practical maxims had always been, "no man can write well for the voice, or compose a good opera, who cannot sing decently himself." To Valesi, then, he applied to teach his little genius singing. Fortunately for the boy the gray-headed old tenor did not return the same answer as the crusty Grätz; and under his auspices young Carl Maria studied this branch of his profession. A pupil of Joseph Grätz, Kalcher by name, afterwards court organist at Munich, was secured for the more strictly musical education of the boy, whose talent, by the father's express command, was to be directed in a dramatic channel.

For both his new teachers Carl Maria seems to have entertained the greatest affection. No better combination to foster the talent of the boy in the sense of his father's wishes could probably have been devised than that of the quiet, careful young theorist, with the fiery, animated, excitable old singer. Whilst on the one side the boy worked steadily under the eyes of Kalcher, in whose house he dwelt far more than with his father, and daily astonished his teacher more and more by the rich fund of imagination in his budding talent, on the other he was taken by Valesi to the Vocal and Instrumental Academy of Munich, and soon made to excite the envy of his oldest fellow pupils, not only as a piano executant, but as a

singer. It cannot be denied, however, that the zeal of both his teachers was lacking in moderation. Not only were the boy's mind and body both overtaxed, but two of the natural, but baneful, tendencies of boyish genius, from which the stricter teachings of Heuschkel and Michel Haydn sought to rescue him, were again in some degree awakened,—the facile production of fruit as yet unripe and dwarfed, and the overweening estimation of the produce. From the evil consequences of this hasty culture he may be said to have been saved by the very hyperbolical excess of his vainglorious father's vauntings, from which the boy's instinctive modesty shrank back alarmed, and which thus, by their reactionary influence, tended to paralyse the deleterious effects of the fatal forcing system. Perhaps it was fortunate, also, that he was early taught a lesson in the school of disappointment, and that no musical publisher could be found to print the score of his earliest opera, "The Power of Love and Wine," and several other pieces, both vocal and instrumental, with which the impatient Franz Anton desired to astonish the world.

At this time, a strange incident had nigh deprived posterity of Weber's genius as composer. To Munich there came a singular young man, with whom Franz Anton had been previously acquainted in Nuremberg, Aloys Sennefelder, an erratic genius, who after spurning the law, for which he had been educated, and tempting fortune as actor, artist, soldier, appeared, in his latest character on the stage of life, as half-starved author. He wrote plays of

some merit; but he could find no publisher to print them. He sought in his own fertile brain a cheap and easy means of reproduction, which he himself could carry out. He sought, and found, and unexpectedly achieved a world-wide celebrity. Need had been his "mother of invention:" and thus Aloys Sennefelder became the inventor of lithography. Franz Anton had naturally access to Sennefelder's working room. The sight of the new invention inspired him with a brilliant idea. What an Eldorado was here for musicians! The scales fell from his eyes; and he saw his child's compositions self-engraved, self-printed, self-published. Fame and fortune were in his own hands! Carl Maria was immediately made to watch the inventor's process in his room, and learn the art. The boy seized the idea with avidity, worked with his usual zeal to attain proficiency, and even, with the assistance of his father, contrived a great amelioration in Sennefelder's press. His ardent little soul thus received an impulse in a new direction: he was fascinated with his work. Just as his enthusiasm had reached to its highest pitch, an inexplicable fire broke out in Kalcher's house. All the boy's compositions had been carefully laid aside by his master in a certain cabinet. This cabinet was wholly destroyed by the fire, whilst scarcely any other object in the apartment was injured. The accident made a powerful impression upon the boy's susceptible mind. His mother's dreamy nature had early imbued him, not only with an implicit reverence for the signs and symbols of

his faith, but with a half poetical, half superstitious, belief in the power of mysterious and invisible influences pervading the universe—a fancy which, more or less, accompanied him throughout his life. He looked upon the accident, so peculiar in its nature, as a warning to him, from the spiritual powers that directed his destiny, to renounce his further studies in music, and devote himself entirely to the new art of his adoption: he even announced his resolve in the firmest manner to his disappointed masters. Critics were severe also in Munich upon the first musical pieces published by the boy from his own lithographic press; and this severity may have had a more genuine secret influence towards inducing the boy's transitory decision to renounce his musical career than the supposed warnings of his familiar demon.

About the same time, Aloys Sennefelder began to draw back from his intercourse with the Webers in mistrust. The jealousy of the inventor was naturally aroused by the advance the father and son were gaining on him in their efforts to bring to greater perfection the art they had learned from him; and every hindrance, instead of aid, was now thrown by him in their way. So Franz Anton concluded that their plans could be better carried into execution in any other place than that which housed the angry Sennefelder.

Once more, without any apparent definite plan, Franz Anton dragged his boy, now fourteen years of age, along with him in his wanderings. Wearied at last with her brother's never-ceasing restlessness,

good aunt Adelheid stoutly refused to travel on again. It was a pang for her to part from her boy Carl Maria; but she needed rest—she could do no more—and she remained.

Of the desultory course of Franz Anton and his boy nothing is known during the year 1799, beyond one fact, not without its importance in the career of Carl Maria. During a short sojourn in Carlsbad, on this passage from town to town, the boy had attracted the attention of the Chevalier von Steinsberg, the manager of the theatre of that town—a man passionately devoted to the stage, and at once author, actor, singer, and director. This enthusiastic individual conceived the liveliest interest for the young genius, and even trusted to the boy's hands the book of an opera, called "The Dumb Girl of the Forest," of which he was the author.

In 1800, the Webers, father and son, were residing at Freiberg in Saxony, a town celebrated throughout Europe for its rich neighbouring mines, and still more for its admirable Mining Academy for the education of the corps of miners. Some of the greatest engineers, geologists, chemists, and other men of science of the day, connected with this great institution, were there collected. It was doubtless the consideration of the advantages, to be derived from intercourse with such illustrious workers in the field of science, which induced Franz Anton to choose Freiberg as the best permanent residence, where he might carry out the execution of his plans for the perfection of the lithographic art. Here too

the boy Carl Maria had at last rest and repose, and time to brood over the tempting opera-book, which could not but again fan into a flame the vainly-quenched fire of musical genius within.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOY'S FIRST OPERA—FREIBERG AND SALZBURG.

THE boy's genius now began to struggle violently against the bonds, self-imposed in one respect, with which it had been fettered. It struggled until its chains were torn asunder: from captive it once more became the master; and its first effort of power was to silence the warning voice, which had issued from the burning cabinet. "Major" the Baron von Weber had publicly advertised his lithographic press and printing-office in his new establishment at Freiberg; but whilst the boy's ability as draughtsman was still exercised upon stone, the scratching of musical notes might be again heard along with the creaking of the printing-press. Other influences, also, no doubt aided the liberation of that fettered genius. Necessity may have compelled an artistic tour, upon which the boy was taken by his father. At all events, Carl Maria, played at concerts during the summer of 1800 at Erfurt, Gotha, and Leipsic: and played with signal success. On the return of the wanderers to Freiberg in August, they found

the theatrical troop of the Chevalier von Steinsberg established in the town. The enthusiastic manager had, it appears, been somewhat prematurely boastful of the great original works, operatic as well as dramatic, with which he intended to astonish the favoured public of Freiberg. His own comedies had been given with applause. The talented manager himself is reported to have been an excellent light comedian. His company, carefully selected and admirably drilled by himself, appears to have stood far higher in artistic acquirements than the ordinary wandering companies of that day; and the success of the troop had been unequivocal. But novelty was needed; and, on the return of the Webers, Steinsberg earnestly urged the young musician to lose no time in composing his "Dumb Girl of the Forest" for the company. This entreaty, doubtless, again roused in the boy's heart the familiar spirit of the family, the passion for every thing connected with the stage. The old gentleman, who had latterly seen with repugnance the absorbing devotion of his son to his newer art, was all impatience once more for the day when his youthful prodigy was to astound the world as an operatic composer. His influence was all in favour of the fresh attempt. In short, in the month of October 1800, the opera was ready. Carl Maria has since mentioned, in his little autobiography, that, seduced by the anecdotes of miracles achieved by celebrated *maestri*, he had written the whole second act of the work in ten days.

It has never been sufficiently explained, why this

opera, composed expressly at Steinsberg's request, to his own *libretto*, and for his own company, should have been first given by another troop. But so it was. The work was first performed in Chemnitz in the month of October. It is announced on an extant bill, as "'The Dumb Girl of the Forest,' a grand romantic comic opera;—the music by C. M. von Weber, thirteen years of age, a pupil of Haydn." That this announcement was dictated by Franz Anton can never for a moment be doubted. His braggart spirit may be clearly seen in the misstatement of the age of his boy, who was then fourteen, and in the suppression of the christian name of Carl Maria's real master, so as to induce the idea that he had studied under the illustrious composer. With what result the work was received by the public of Chemnitz does not appear. In a correspondence, which was shortly to ensue, it was asserted that the opera was hailed there "with the most distinguished applause."

Its turn was now to come at Freiberg. The Chevalier von Steinsberg had done his best to place his "Dumb Girl of the Forest" to all possible advantage on the stage. A considerable excitement had been created in the town respecting the work of the youthful prodigy. All Freiberg was on the tiptoe of expectation. But papa had blown the loud trumpet with so much indiscreet energy, that it was impossible for him to avoid awakening the most inharmonious echoes. Opposing parties were formed in the town. The leaders of the adverse party were the Professor

of singing, Fischer, and the Stadt Musikus, Siegert, who himself conducted the orchestra at the theatre. They took the field, mounted on their hobbies of musical pedantry and old-established forms, against all comers who should dare to defend the extravagancies, the mistakes, and the scant musical knowledge of the boy composer. The other party was formed of the ardent youth of the Academy, the members of the gayer society of the town, whose hearts the little witty young lithographer and musician had won, and all the many jovial friends whom Herr Papa, spite his affected military rigidity, had gathered round him at the "Golden Lion," by his pleasant talk and genial manners. All went tolerably well up to the day of the first representation, which took place upon the 24th November. Murmurings, it is true, had been heard. A great portion of the public was annoyed by the unaccustomed wording and bombastic tone of the playbill. Not only was the composer announced as "Carl Maria Baron von Weber, thirteen years of age, a pupil of Haydn," the real christian name of his master being again carefully suppressed; but the public was informed that the work was dedicated, by permission, to "Her Electoral Highness, Maria Amelie Auguste, Reigning Electress of Saxony." The eventful evening came. Spite of the support of the youth of the Mining Academy, spite of the good-will of friends and well-wishers, spite of Franz Anton's trumpet—perhaps, in some degree, because of it—the opera produced little or no effect.

The musical critic of the Freiberg paper spoke of the work without harshness, but so far in disparaging terms, that it was called "a mere blossom of genius, which promises better and riper fruit." Franz Anton's disappointment was terrible. His dreams of immediate glory, honour, and fortune, through his wonder-child, were rudely dispelled: and it is to the bitterness of the father's rage, that must be attributed an extravagant and absurd newspaper article, which appeared on the occasion, in the name of the son. The foolish impetuosity, the vaunting discourse, and the reckless conduct of Franz Anton, were doomed to be the bane of the poor boy, whose innate modesty and taste were continually shocked by a father, whom his affectionate heart was so much disposed to love and reverence. The newspaper article ascribed the failure of the opera to the bad leadership, and, in an underhand way, to the ill-will of the conductor. An immediate paper-war was the result. The pigtails of Conductor Siegert, and his friend the Professor, were stiff with indignation. The "pert chit," who had dared to sign such an attack, was to be trounced. Crushing letters appeared, to be met by rejoinders. The poor little composer was accused of ignorance, plagiarism, and even imposture. Falsehood, malevolence, and intrigue, were thrown back in the teeth of the irritated assailants. The success of the work at Chemnitz was asserted and denied; and the voice of a depreciating correspondent from that town was declared, on the Weber side, to be worth no more than "the yelping of a cur." No laurels can be said

to have been culled by either party in this desperate fight. The wounds received fell all upon the heart of the poor lad, whose hand had been made to attach his own signature to the far from elegant, and highly injudicious letters, which were so absurdly intended to support his honour and his fame. The consequences of the paper-war were harmful in another respect. Although the young blood of Freiberg had manifested its delight at the dirt thrown upon the "old pigtail faction," the Webers had lost in the skirmish the consideration of many of the better families of the place. Franz Anton determined to shake the dust off his feet, and leave the ungrateful town for ever!

It may be here recorded, however, that Weber himself, in his autobiographical sketch, speaks of "The Dumb Girl of the Forest" as "a very crude work, but not wholly without inventive power;" and regrets that it was more widely circulated than he liked himself. He says that it was given for fourteen nights in Vienna, was translated into the Bohemian language for Prague, and was represented with applause at St. Petersburg.

At what precise date Franz Anton again took his wanderer's staff in his hand to seek fortune on a better soil is not recorded. In the month of November 1801, father and son are again to be found in Salzburg. Affairs connected with his previous theatrical management appear to have led Franz Anton hither. But at Salzburg all was still in dire confusion. The French, under Moreau, had barely left

the place. Whatever his hopes and intentions may have been, they appear to have been slow in realisation; for the sojourn in Salzburg continued far into the summer of 1802.

The leisure afforded by this protracted residence was employed by young Carl Maria in the composition of a two-act little comic opera, entitled "Peter Schmoll and his Neighbours." The subject had been derived from an old novel by Cramer. With the advantage of the experience he had gained, the boy was now in a position to profit, far more than before, by the advantages again afforded in his studies under old Michel Haydn. It is probable, at the same time, that another personage may have exercised some influence over the development of the boy's talent at this juncture. That well-known wandering musical genius, Sigismund Neukomm, at that time twenty-four years of age, was his fellow-pupil then: and the result of the intimacy of the two ardent musical spirits cannot have been without importance. The work on the new opera was terminated before the departure of the Webers from Salzburg, in April 1802. Weber himself has mentioned that, in the composition of this opera, he had had the intention of employing several obsolete old musical instruments. The extant score bears no trace of this design, however. Possibly his judicious old master may have kept him back from such a purpose. Whatever may have been still the lad's shortcomings, there is no doubt that a great advance must have been made in his composition to have

permitted the strict and crusty old master to pen so admirable a testimonial as that which he gave his scholar upon this occasion. "In all truth, with full conviction, and with the best judgment," wrote Michel Haydn, "I attest, that this opera has been composed in the truest rules of harmony, with much fire, great delicacy, and appropriate feeling." That the boy was in many ways actively and industriously occupied with his art is manifest from an extant letter, written by him to Herr Andrée of Offenbach, the musical publisher: his first letter it was to one of these arbiters of a young musician's destinies—his first real letter of business. But this first effort was unsuccessful; the compositions offered—and they were numerous and manifold—were all declined. A better fortune attended the lad, however, in his "*Six petites pièces à quatre mains*," also composed during the stay at Salzburg, and forwarded to Gombart, the Augsburg publisher. These pieces appeared; and they have been since declared by musical critics to be replete with a graceful beauty, and a deep feeling, which were never surpassed in his later compositions for the piano. It would almost seem that ill-judging Franz Anton proved a bane rather than a blessing to his boy, whenever his own influence was used to work a spell over the young composer's fortunes. In the instance of the failure with Andrée, the father's unlucky hand is easily to be traced in a passage of Carl Maria's letter to the publisher, in which he speaks of himself as the pupil of many very celebrated masters in Dresden, Prague,

and Vienna, when it is notorious that, in all the wanderings of the Weber pair, their sojourn in these places was only of the briefest nature.

But the footlights of the stage were the bright beacon, towards which the familiar spirit of the house of Weber was sure to steer their bark. The first consideration was the production of the new opera. Opportunities seemed to offer themselves in Augsburg. Edmund von Weber, Franz Anton's eldest son, who had entirely seceded from his father's company of comedians in 1798 at Salzburg, was residing in that town, partly as musical conductor of the theatre, partly in the service of Prince Bishop Clemens Wenzeslaus, who still retained his bishopric of Augsburg, although the Peace of Luneville had deprived him of his rich domains of Treves and Coblenz, and all his other lands had been annexed to the conquering Republic, "one and indivisible." The revenues of this genial old Prince Bishop were still very considerable, however, thanks to the compensation, in the form of subsidy, bestowed on him by the German Princes. As a true son of that splendid patron of art, August III. of Saxony, he spent his life pleasantly in the society of the Muses, of whom Euterpe and Thalia were his especial darlings; and entertained, at his own cost, an excellent orchestra and troop of singers. His favourite composer was the great Haydn; and to this circumstance it was probably owing that Edmund von Weber, one of the master's most distinguished pupils, had obtained a recommendation to the enthusiastic Clemens

Wenzeslaus, and had been received into his service. Here, then, was a brilliant opening for the production of young Carl Maria's "Peter Schmoll," through the interest of his brother. But the circumstances of the time were unfavourable: and this great hope was, for a while, deferred. So Franz Anton took up his staff, and again led forth his wonder-child upon his wanderings.

The probable end and aim of this journey appears to have been the settlement of Franz Anton's affairs at Cutin. The father had doubtless other intentions, which might have been turned to his advantage during his course towards the north of Germany. But although it is apparent that Franz Anton, with his son, visited, during the autumn of this year, Meiningen, Eisenach, Sondershausen, Brunswick, where at least a month was passed, and finally Cutin, no record can be found of any concerts where the boy's talent was turned to profit. It may be surmised, however, that Carl Maria may have spent many blessed hours among the old musical works in the Ducal Library of Brunswick, and garnered up seed, to be sown on fruitful soil, and to spring up afterwards in that almost incredible mass of richly coloured flowers of musical art, which he presented to the world.

CHAPTER IV.

VIENNA AND THE ABBE VOGLER.

It is worthy of remark that, although no especial event of note in Carl Maria's life, no especial personal association, exercised any peculiar influence over his mind during this journey, it was exactly at this juncture, that an evident and even striking change occurred in the development of the young composer's genius. All at once he ceased to crawl as a child in the nurse's leading-strings. Although his steps may have been as yet somewhat timid and uncertain, he walked alone. All he did was now, and was to be henceforth, imbued with the life and truth of his own heart and soul. The path, into which a mysterious inward impulse urged him, was doubtless the right path, which was eventually to lead to the great race-course of art, upon which he was destined to win his wreath of immortality at the cost of his own life. The impulse, there is every reason to suppose, was that fresh spring of a first love, which now stirred his young heart, and taught it to sing love-songs.

His first real "*Lied*" was written in Hamburg in the October of 1802, to the words of Matthisson's exquisite little poem, "The Taper." In this his own true feelings first found that voice which was thereafter to be prized by Germany as the best and dearest to her ears; through darkness and light, through love and hate, through the struggles for freedom, and the storms of battle, to the great goal of victory and glory. What all Weber's compositions, up to the period of his great operas, could not earn for him, was won by those songs, in which his own life's pulses beat,—those songs, whose joyousness made a people glad, whose pathos made a people weep,—those songs, which stamped him the heartfelt singer of a people's heart.

In Cutin, during the two weeks of the Webers' stay in October 1802, Carl Maria had the good fortune to win the strong affection of Johann Heinrich Voss, then resident at that place, who took such a fancy to the pale interesting lad, that he supplied him with the words of many of the cheeriest, brightest, gayest songs, which were to gladden the hearts of Germany. One anecdote, belonging to these days in Cutin, shows how easily roused, even still, were the boy's susceptibilities. The Webers were lodged in the house of a Counsellor Stricker, where music was the favourite occupation. The son of the host was accustomed, to young Carl Maria's disgust, to achieve the most triumphant successes on—the Jew's-harp! And on one occasion, when a performance of this distinguished virtuoso on two Jew's-harps

excited so general an enthusiasm, that Franz Anton himself exclaimed, "Good heavens, how beautiful!" the boy closed his piano in indignation, and declared, in the most decided manner, that he would play no more!

In the month of December 1802 father and son had returned to Augsburg. The fortunes of "Peter Schmoll and his Neighbours" were yet to be decided. The lively pleasant Prince Bishop Clemens Wenzeslaus welcomed them with his characteristic kindliness. Along with Edmund von Weber, who stood high in the good man's favour, they were frequently guests in his palace; and many a pleasant evening was there passed in concerted performances, wherein Edmund led on the violin; the Bishop himself, and the son of his court-physician Ahorner, took the viola or flute; Franz Anton flourished on the violoncello or bass; and Carl Maria played the piano or sang. But, in these little Capuan delights, the interests of "Peter Schmoll" were not forgotten. The theatre, during the absence of the young composer and his father, had been brought into very tolerable working order. Early in 1803 the opera was already in rehearsal: and in the month of March, as far as can be ascertained, Carl Maria's second represented opera appeared upon the boards; appeared, however, without any great effect, it must be supposed, as no record of success, triumphant or otherwise, is anywhere to be found. It is possible, too, that the comparative failure of this fresh attempt determined the next step in the wandering and checkered life of Franz Anton

and his son. It was announced, to the good Bishop's great regret, that a journey to Vienna was an unavoidable necessity.

The boy himself may have felt, by growing experience, what were his own deficiencies in technical science, and how much might yet be acquired in that great school and judgment-seat of musical art; or Franz Anton may have sighed for admission into that artistic Paradise, which was considered the Eldorado of musicians. From many evidences it is manifest that Carl Maria himself was tormented with fears and scruples at the thought of approaching the very steps of that great temple, over which hovered the spirits of Mozart and Glück; and of which the two great living heroes, Haydn and Beethoven, still guarded the entrance. But to Vienna it was resolved that the Webers should go: and to Vienna they went.

Towards the close of the year 1803, the brilliant sun of musical art, which had so long shone with rare effulgence on the city of Vienna, had begun to grow pale; although it still shed rays of warmth and brightness unknown elsewhere. For half a century a long unbroken line of the great masters had revealed the mighty mysteries of their art to the enraptured public of Vienna—for half a century had these masters hewn, chiselled, polished the rough block of public taste into a form of exquisite refinement. From the time of Glück's first advent into the imperial city, not a year had passed that some new immortal work had not given strength to the growing

judgment of the fortunate Viennese, or thrown a fresh light upon some yet unknown path in art. Thus, whilst, on the one hand, the public of Vienna had been so accustomed to look up with such reverence to the mighty ones, as to have lost their power of measuring ordinary excellence with due appreciation; on the other, it had gained a power of refined critical judgment, in all that was really good and great, which made every neophyte tremble to approach its dreaded judgment-hall. Haydn, now seventy-one years of age, still lived: but he had yielded his conductorship of the Italian opera to Salieri, himself no longer young. The still greater pupil of these great masters, Beethoven, had but just begun to draw around him that magic circle of influence on art, which was later to spread out in proportions so colossal; moreover, he lived retired from the world. Paer had already seceded to Dresden; Righini had left Vienna even earlier; and Weigl now appeared but little on the stage of art. But Vienna was still, in general repute, the great city of true harmony. Musical taste still seemed a portion of the very flesh and blood of its inhabitants. Not only in the theatre, but in churches, and in concert-rooms, music was a religion: its high priests were many.

The impression made upon the wanderers as they looked around them in that brilliant city must needs have been a dazzling one. In all this glitter Franz Anton felt himself at home; and it is probable that his ardent desire to place his child at once among the shining lights of this glorious hemisphere may have

induced him to change his original plans. There is no doubt that his primary intention had been to solicit the kind will of the great Haydn for his young composer, on whom some of the boundless treasures of science possessed by the immortal old man might have been well bestowed, and who came backed not only by recommendations from brother Michel and Edmund von Weber, one of Haydn's most favourite pupils, but by his own indisputable talent. Possibly the aged master, who had just completed two of his greatest and freshest oratorios, and was again at work, may have been too multifariously occupied to give attention to the lad. It is still more probable that Franz Anton imagined his end might be more rapidly attained by the aid of another brilliant celebrity, at that time resident in Vienna. This was the Abbé Vogler.

A singular apparition was the Abbé Vogler, one of the most celebrated musical theorists of his time; a man of great powers of judgment, and a mighty memory, which always stood him in good stead. The severe discipline of his ecclesiastical education had bestowed on him a capacity not only for order, but for organisation; and his indisputable talent for teaching notably increased his influence over the young spirits of the age. His intercourse with the world was marked by the strangest contrasts. As a pupil of the Jesuits, he was endowed with the faculty of always displaying that side of his multiform genius best adapted to his purpose or to the passing occasion. At once lively and imposing,

purposely original in his manners, yet without ridiculous exaggeration; combining the dignity of the ecclesiastic, and the aristocratic bearing of a man of the world, with the bombast of the mountebank; full of mysticism, which was made to play the part of profundity in his language; apt to conceal deficiencies under the mask of self-confidence,—he was the very man to impose his influence on a great portion of the musical world; whilst by another he was attacked as a musical heretic and blasphemer. He had always had the advantage of being supported by a powerful ecclesiastical party; by the great ones of the earth, and by the women; and thus, as a wandering apostle of his own musical religion, he had been accustomed suddenly to appear in various parts of the civilised world, and then as suddenly to vanish; at one time a prophet, at another a martyr; now in France, England, or Italy; now in Greece, or on the northern coasts of Africa. From all these journeys he was supposed to have brought treasures of ancient musical lore, from which he reaped his best advantage. After years of wandering, he had sprung up in Vienna; and there, after having given his opera of "Castor and Pollux" as an oratorio, had contrived to raise public expectations to fever-pitch by mysterious, half-whispered revelations respecting his forthcoming opera of "Samori." Such was the Abbé Vogler, when the Webers, father and son, arrived in Vienna.

It was natural that Franz Anton's sympathies should have been attracted by such a spangled harlequin of art. There was a strong fellow-feeling in the

characters of the two men: there was a strange likeness even in their features. Both were vain—both sought glitter more than solid truth—both were ever ready to sacrifice depth and worth to sparkling effect—both loved the sensuous in art, in nature, in life, and in life's ends and aims. In this much the Abbé Vogler had the advantage of Franz Anton;—the circumstances of his education, and the chances of his intercourse with the world, had seemingly given him the power of an alchemist, who could transform the veriest dross into gold—at all events, to the dazzled eyes of ordinary men.

It is natural enough that the affectionate nature of the boy Carl Maria should have attached itself greatly to the new master given him in the Abbé Vogler. It is very probable also, that, unconsciously to himself, he may have felt instinctively the strange affinity between the honoured master and the father, whom, spite of all the old man's weaknesses, he loved so fondly, and may have taken it to heart. But certain it is, that, to the last hour of his life, his attachment to Vogler never lost its strength. To Franz Anton the consent of Vogler to give instructions to his son, obtained indirectly through a letter from his friend Count Medem in Salzburg to a Count Firmian in Vienna, appeared as much a stroke of good fortune as of policy. It came about in this wise.

In the house of this Count Firmian, young Carl Maria made the acquaintance of Johann Baptist Gänsbacher, a young officer, who had lately retired from the service with a golden medal, in order to

turn his ardent passion for music to account, by studying under the Abbé Vogler. A fine powerful broad-shouldered young fellow was Gänsbacher, who, in addition to his darling art, loved wine, women, and rifle-shooting, of which he was a master. His free jovial nature made a powerful impression on the lad, who quickly felt the influence of a companion older than himself by eight years, and soon learned to love him with an ardent and life-enduring friendship. Very speedily he became a sharer in all his new friend's youthful follies, joys, sorrows, purposes, and aspirations. The affection was reciprocal: and young Gänsbacher's first service to Carl Weber was rendered in obtaining for him a hearing from the Abbé Vogler. The boy's own talent did the rest. The Abbé's experienced tact recognised his genius at once. He forthwith invited the neophyte into his own choice band of favourite disciples.

With all his mountebank nature, the Abbé Vogler had the tact to see that this new gem was not to be spoiled by a false setting. He threw all the weight of his judgment and advice into the scale of renewed labour on the old dreary soil. It was a hard task to him to teach the ardent lad this duty of self-abnegation: it was harder still for the young composer to suppress his own creative power, and dispel his own dreams of beauty, in order to go back into the dusty region of dry research. But it was done; and, during his stay in Vienna, Carl Maria devoted almost all his energies to the study of the great masters of the past, under the guidance of the Abbé Vogler. Cha-

racteristic, however, of the worldly-wise Abbé is the fact, that in the midst of these important labours he busied the active lad with a piano-forte arrangement of the airs of his own opera of "Samori," which was then his great thought and care, and which was to be shortly produced with much pompous and imposing effect.

For the first time, young Carl Maria was freed from the importunities of his father, who had gone back to Salzburg. He was now seventeen years of age. The seductions of a capital, gay and dissipated as was Vienna, offered themselves alluringly to his ardent young spirit. "Wine, women, and song," was the favourite burden of his dashing young friend Gänsbacher; and could Carl Maria resist singing a second to the inviting strain? His poverty fortunately prevented his plunging headlong into the full stream of life. But he was young, amiable, talented; he sang delightfully; he played the guitar to admiration; and to his own surprise, he found that women's sparkling eyes lingered with even still greater favour on his own fragile frame than on that of his stalwart friend. The charms of the bright flower-bestrewn life around him were irresistible. Through carolling, kissing, drinking Vienna, he wandered with a troop of choice spirits, the brilliant Gänsbacher at their head, drinking, kissing, carolling. In the public gardens of the capital, sober citizens, with their wives and daughters, shrank into corners, as the noisy merry band appeared: But who could resist the furtive glance, and vainly subdued titter, when

sprightly Carl Maria sang his roguish songs, to which Gänsbacher and Co. shouted their merry laughing chorus? The intoxicating draught of pleasure, quaffed in that lively capital, fevered the lad's blood; and the ardent and imaginative temperament of the young genius burst forth in that adoration of female beauty, which, up to the period of his marriage, strewed his life's path with roses—not without thorns, however. But the pleasures and dissipations of Vienna were soon to have an end.

Whether Vogler had opportunities of learning the lad's talent for conducting, by his assistance in the rehearsals of "Samori," or had discovered it by other means,—at all events, when Professor Rhode, then director of the theatre at Breslau, wrote to the Abbé, begging him to recommend a conductor for his orchestra, the great musical prophet put forward one of the youngest of his disciples. In his eighteenth year Carl Maria von Weber was engaged for the conductorship of the Breslau opera.

It was a hard struggle for the lad to quit Vienna and its joys. The separation from Vogler, from Gänsbacher, from his many friends, cost him dear —still dearer the necessity of tearing himself away from an attachment formed with a lady of rank, who, older than the stripling, seems to have loved him ardently. The struggle was indeed a hard one. But gratified ambition, the allurements of a comparatively independent position, the hope of earning a provision for the old spendthrift Franz Anton, were powerful motives for his decision to accept the offer.

With heavy heart he tore himself from Vienna; and, taking with him his father, who was again to live with him, he started in September 1804 for his new and important career in Breslau.

CHAPTER V.

WEBER'S FIRST CONDUCTORSHIP.

A NEW epoch now began in the life of Carl Maria von Weber. His true creative power had first bloomed forth at Hamburg: his extraordinary faculty for artistic organisation was now to be developed at Breslau. It was natural enough that both artists and public in that city should have regarded, as much with mistrust as curiosity, the young genius, so suddenly placed at the head of an establishment of no inferior mark in Germany, who had never climbed the old conventional ladder, step by step, from the orchestra into the conductor's seat, but had flown on barely fledged wings from his master's nest to the summit of the orchestral tree. It must certainly have appeared an overweening audacity in the eyes of those who did not know the gifted youth's earlier history. The theatre had been his cradle. Theatrical instincts had become a portion of his nature. The knowledge of theatrical workings and theatrical effect had come to him with the very alphabet of

his childhood. At the same time, the self-confidence, natural to the son and pupil of Franz Anton, which animated the youth, only just emerging from his boyhood, and the announcement, by his boastful father's mouth, of his determination to raise the standard of taste in the town, were quite sufficient to cause the grave to shake their heads at such presumption, and to raise a host of opponents to the boy-conductor on his very advent into Breslau.

The musical taste of the public at Breslau was not, it is true, at any great pitch of cultivation, although many excellent musicians resided in the place. This state of things resulted, in great measure, from the social condition of the town. The sharply defined divisions and sub-divisions of castes and classes, then so paramount in Germany, and nowhere more rigidly enforced, were almost impassable barriers to any community of feeling on the field of art. The higher and richer nobility of the province lived on their estates during the summer, and when they returned to their town residences in winter, held themselves proudly aloof. The poorer nobility, who were chiefly in military service, and the government officials, recruited from their ranks, could do no less than follow the example of their superiors. They all lacked the spirit or the means to distinguish themselves as Mæcenases of art, and beyond dance-music, and the "table-music" of the period, were utter nonentities as regarded musical taste. The aristocracy of money was chiefly composed of those members of the tribes of Israel, who, although in a flourishing

state of society, they often distinguish themselves as lovers of art, in the more confined sphere of such a town as Breslau, thought only of raising themselves in their social status, by a slavish imitation of the toping, gambling, dancing habits of the leaders of fashion. The late Bishop had withdrawn to Johannisberg, and taken his choir with him; so that even church-music had sunk to the lowest ebb. A home for art was only to be found among the circles of the less richly endowed citizens—the Professors of the University, the officials of second rank, and the Christian traders, many of whose hearts, it cannot be denied, beat warmly in its service.

This condition of things was, of all others, the one least favourable to the standing and character of the young conductor. The nobility took it ill, that a youth of title should lower himself to be a mere musician: the untitled burgher mistrusted him as a noble. Prejudice assailed him on every side; and thus it was that he was destined to assume his new position, for which, even under favourable circumstances, he had scarcely yet sufficient power and weight, and in which he never felt himself at home, although it brought him the richest treasures of experience.

The young and highly recommended new conductor was received with kindness and distinction, however, by the management of the theatre, which, after many misadventures, had been undertaken by a joint-stock company, composed of some of the most influential and best-educated citizens, with Professor

Rhode at their head. By the zeal and exertion of the able and excellent Professor, the orchestra had been freshly recruited and strengthened by some of the best instrumentalists of the day, although no reliance could be placed on their permanent aid, inasmuch as they were ill-remunerated, and naturally anxious to secure better engagements. In a similar position was placed a not ineffective troop of singers. Means, at least, were there to perform, with sufficient credit, the operas of Mozart, Daleyrac, and Vogler, and even to execute some of the best classical works in concert-form, with a certain degree of excellence. The boy-conductor seized his baton with all the fire of his eighteen summers; perhaps also with an overweening sense of his new independence, evidenced by his resolve to lead his army to the musical fray wholly according to his own young will and fancy. He proceeded at once to exercise his inborn faculty for organisation by a complete revolution of the long-established arrangement of the orchestra. Whereas the wind-instruments had been customarily placed in front, the string-instruments being arranged together further behind, he now mingled them after his own notions of effect, to the right and left of his seat. Like all novelties, this arrangement was sure to be displeasing. Both musicians in the orchestra, and public in the theatre, loudly complained of the acoustic result. Carl Maria listened to the objections, deliberated maturely, and ended by maintaining the worth of his innovation. An opposition party was consequently formed amongst both public and artists

against the presumptuous boy-conductor. The young genius fought his battle manfully: but his heart was wrung by the retirement in disgust of one of the most distinguished and able of his band, the first violin and leader, Schnabel. He felt this slight keenly, as an evil omen on his first steps in a new career.

Spite of opposition, jealousy, envy, and enmity, however, Carl Maria found warm friends. Among the most zealous of these was young Friedrich Wilhelm Berner, a talented, and even learned musical theorist, piano and organ player, and composer, who afterwards was destined to a widely spread celebrity for his many genial works. He was about six years the lad's senior. Carl Maria had brought a letter to him from his patron the Abbé Vogler. He found in Berner a nature congenial to his own—generous, gay, animated, almost reckless in its wild love of life and life's enjoyments. Both the young men were ardent worshippers of their art, both eager in the pursuit of pleasure. The two were speedily sworn friends. But Berner, spite his joviality, was a hard-working and highly-educated artist; and his influence upon the budding genius he took to his bosom, with as much admiration as love, was in many respects a powerful one. Carl Maria recognised his superior knowledge, and profited by his advice in composition. By a strange chance, another celebrated piano executant, Klingohr, happened to be in Breslau at the time. The three young artists were destined to exercise a singular action and reaction on each other. Berner, like Weber, was a worshipper of originality. But the

former, with all his learning, was wont to sacrifice clearness of style to his desire to produce new and startling effects in harmony; whilst the latter, although striving after an eccentricity bordering on the fantastic, even at the expense of artistic completeness, was undoubtedly richer in that wonderous flow of ideas, springing from true genius. Klingohr, in his way too a hankerer after originality, represented the spirit of clearness and standard correctness.

All the flowers of Weber's genius, which budded during his stay in Breslau, show distinctly the training of the gardeners, who helped to tend the plant at this period. The craving after originality, which beset the minds of the three young musicians, now brought together in so strange a triumvirate of art, and which they reciprocally fostered even to rashness in each other, evidently had a tendency to lead Carl Maria's creative powers into a sphere in which all old forms and rules were to be met by utter negation, and thus almost to stultify the teaching of such men as Heuschkel and Michel Haydn. All his compositions of this time bear more or less the impress of this exaggerated feeling, even to the best of his works written at Breslau; his "*Ouverture Chinoise*," which, in a milder form, and denuded of several orchestral monstrosities, was afterwards given as an appropriate overture to Schiller's fantastic play of "Turandot."

At the same time there is no doubt that, through the friendly rivalry of the three executants on the piano, Carl Maria arrived at the full consciousness of his own surprising powers in this branch of his art.

His improvisations on the instrument became brilliant fairy dreams: on all who heard him, his play produced what has been called "that spiritual intoxication which seemed to bear their souls aloft to regions beyond humanity."

The friendship of Berner, a native of the town, and high in his fellow-citizens' esteem, stood Carl Maria in good stead. His new friend shielded him with courage against his opponents, defended his compositions and his workings with zeal, against the carpings and snarlings of the harsh or incredulous; and protected him with all the warmth of a good heart, when the tongue of scandal assailed his character. He did even more. He generously gave up many of his own lessons to his friend, when Carl Maria's youthful extravagancies quickly rendered his meagre salary of 600 thalers a very insufficient income.

In truth, the state of society in Breslau was almost as dangerous to the youth's ardent spirit as the more brilliant city he had left; and in many ways Carl Maria's existence there was far from commendable. Life was rendered expensive by the rich luxurious nobles who flocked back to their palaces in winter. Morality was at the lowest ebb; play was high. Adventurers of both sexes streamed to the capital of Silesia during the fashionable season; and a young artist's temperament needed more courage than Carl Maria possessed, to resist the allurements of forbidden fruit.

The thoughtless young man was soon loaded with

a heavy weight of debt, which, for many long years, he found it impossible to remove from his weary shoulders. He was hampered, it was true, by the unlucky Franz Anton, whose speculations in Breslau as an engraver wholly failed. But the expenses of his own wild life were manifold: and one alone sufficed to drag him down. Many a female heart, no doubt, both within the theatre and without its walls, was allured by the sweet smile and seductive manners of the pale, slender, languishing, but passionately ardent young conductor; whilst his own heart seems to have been more seriously involved in an unfortunate and misplaced attachment to a singer in the theatre. This woman was married to a rough drunkard, who mishandled her. The couple were daily falling more and more into an abject state of poverty. Young Carl Maria pitied the woman; and pity was soon transformed into the feeling next "akin." That she was an unworthy object of either pity or affection is very clear: she misused his goodness of heart, gnawed incessantly at his slender purse, and quickly plunged him into a slough of difficulties nigh equal to her own.

Less dangerous and less compromising pleasures were enjoyed by the young musician in merry social meetings of artists and lovers of art, of which he himself, with his joyous songs and sparkling guitar, was always the life and centre; and at which Klingohr and Berner, and another staunch friend, a singular, kind-hearted, clever young literary Falstaff, by name Ebell, the editor of the Breslau paper, kept the

spirit of the party alive, and the "table in a roar" by their witty sallies, and their improvised choruses to Carl Maria's ditties. Still better and steadier hours were passed by the youth in the houses of his director, Professor Rhode, and of Jacob Lahn, an old merchant, and admirable amateur flute-player, for whose talent on that instrument Weber composed his "Romanza Siciliana." In both the best music was often executed; although it was allowed occasionally to run riot in the most extravagant comicalities, invented at the moment. From the "Philharmonic Society" of Breslau, where art might have been practised in its worthiest form, Carl Maria held himself aloof. Although its members were generally most friendly to the young musician, his old adversary, and to the last active opponent, Schnabel, there faced him always with his enmity: and collisions were disagreeable. Carl Maria's life in Breslau was thus not always the most reputable. In his artistic career, however, he was still steadily climbing the rough ladder, which led, spite many a shaky step, to eminence and fame.

His creative powers were not allowed to lie dormant. An opera-book, published early in 1804, by Professor Rhode, who was an author as well as a musician, upon the well-known legend of "Rubezahl," fell into Carl Maria's hands. The subject, although not treated in a masterly manner, attracted the youth's poetic spirit by its supernatural fancy, and inspired him to recommence his composition for the stage. Beyond the overture, a chorus of spirits, an

air, and a quintet, nothing, however, has been found on paper. These fragments, when shown to Ludwig Spohr by Weber himself, in after years, were pronounced by that great musician to be "amateurish enough," and giving but little promise of that ripe talent which was to produce "Der Freischütz" and "Euryanthe." The overture was, long afterwards, greatly remodelled by Weber, and given to the world in a form in which it was admitted among the ranks of his greatest compositions of the kind, as "The Ruler of the Spirits."

Meanwhile, the young conductor's efficiency in his post became more and more the subject of dispute and attack. Firmness, precision, correctness of tone, were all accorded him; but he was accused of regardlessness for the singers, and want of judgment in the choice of his tempo. Even his friend Ebell criticised this latter error, as detracting from the effect of many overtures. He was simply garnering up a store of experience for that proud time when he was the acknowledged master of conductorship. But even in Breslau he possessed the great gifts of steadiness in the thorough execution of his conceptions, and of power not only to inspire all around him with the spirit and fire which animated his own breast, but to hold his artists in his grasp as one body, to move in unison with the dictates of one soul. His greatest error lay in entire forgetfulness of the fact, that he was only yet a lad, and sat for the first time in the conductor's seat.

Matters could not last thus. Spite of the un-

flinching support of Rhode, the young conductor was soon in collision with other members of the committee of management. He knew too well the nature of theatrical speculations, even from his childhood's experience, not to be aware that financial results were paramount; and that operas, whatever their worth, must be given if they draw full houses. But he hated the spirit of steady speculation, and urged on measures for the improvement of his operatic company, by the engagement of superior artists, who demanded higher remuneration, and the dismissal of old artists, whom he declared incompetent. He had the conceit to stake his credit on the result of these measures, and to guarantee the financial improvement of the fortunes of the theatre. But these promises were doomed to be unfulfilled. By the end of the year 1805 the deficit in the treasury of the establishment had increased. The directors murmured more than ever against their presumptuous conductor; a reduction of troop and orchestra were imperatively demanded; and Weber's position became more and more untenable. His hostility with Schnabel, now director of the cathedral choir, although none of his own seeking, injured him in public estimation. His attempt to rival his enemy in the production of Haydn's "Creation" terminated in no advantage to himself. In the midst of this state of things a circumstance occurred which ended all.

It had indeed nearly ended all—the young composer's life with his career. One day Carl Maria had begged his friend Berner to come and hear his

overture to "Rubezahl," just then completed. It was night when Berner arrived. A light at Weber's window showed that the youth was within. He mounted, knocked at the door—no answer; again —no note of friendly welcome. At last he pushed open the door and entered. The lamp was on the table—the piano open—but where was Carl Maria? By the sofa Berner stumbled. What was it? He had fallen upon the lifeless body of his friend; by his side a broken bottle, emitting a strong odour. He raised up the seeming corpse in his arms, and shouted for help. Franz Anton hurried from a neighbouring room alarmed. With a glance the father discovered that the bottle was one of a deadly acid used in his engraving. His boy was poisoned. Doctors were called in: and with difficulty the unhappy youth was brought to life. But his mouth and windpipe were frightfully burned—his voice was gone. For weeks the poor young fellow lay between life and death. At last came the merest whisper of a voice, the full force of which was never to return, the charm of which in song was to be impaired through life. At last the sufferer could explain, that, shivering with cold from prolonged work, he had stretched out his hand for a flask of wine, which he knew was on the table—had seized the bottle of aquafortis, left by culpable carelessness close by—had drank. His first power of articulation, however, was used to hail Berner as the saviour of his life with all the fervour of his grateful heart; without his friend's timely arrival, no doubt the ge-

nius which was to give "Der Freischütz," "Euryanthe," and "Oberon" to the world, would have been hushed for ever in an early grave.

For more than two months the lad was unable to resume his duties. During his illness his opponents had profited by his absence to work out their ends. He found his reforms ignored, his orchestra enfeebled. His feelings were deeply wounded; and, spite of the entreaties of Rhode and other friends, he flung up his situation in disgust. But his time had not been spent in vain. A mighty spring had already been made from the scholar's bench by Michel Haydn's side to the conductor's seat of a great national theatre, from the plodding scholar to the independent master; and if no great step in the right direction had been taken by Carl Maria as composer when in Breslau, he had dug deeply, even if painfully, in a mine of experience which was to produce him the richest ore in after days.

The situation of Carl Maria was a painful one. Hampered by poor old Franz Anton, now an invalid, and harassed by his creditors, he had no other resource but his meagrely remunerated lessons. He declared his intention to go forth on the wide world as "a tramping musical pedlar." His friends heard this wild resolve with grief, and did all they could to ameliorate his position by seeking him more pupils. But even this aid now galled his weary spirit. Things looked black indeed; when a ray of sunshine gleamed through the clouds around him. In one of the few noble houses where the poor artist was admitted as

teacher, he made the acquaintance of a Fräulein von Belonde, maid of honour to the Duchess Louise of Würtemberg, who, with her husband Prince Eugen Friedrich of Würtemberg, dwelt on their domain of Carlsruhe in Silesia. Fräulein von Belonde was an admirable piano-forte player; and she took the liveliest interest in the pale amiable young artist, whose wonderful powers of improvisation enchanted her by their rich fancy. She was touched by his sad position, and resolved to assist him by every means in her power. An opportunity offered itself in furtherance of her intention.

The duke with his family had spent a portion of the previous winter in Breslau. A strange, fanciful, excitable nature was the duke's. In early youth a passionate admirer of female beauty, he had afterwards given all his energies to the pursuit of mesmeric experiments, and was now as ardent and enthusiastic an adept in music. Music had become his passion, and the main end and aim of all his aspirations. Thus, when the domain of Carlsruhe in Silesia fell into his possession, by the extinction of another branch of the Würtemberg family, he not only reconstructed his palace, erected churches and schools, and made of the secluded residence a brilliant little court, where powdered and pigtailed courtiers, with cocked-hat and sword, wandered hand in hand with lofty-wigged and high-heeled beauties through the wondering green forests; but he built a magnificent theatre, which many a capital might have envied, and invited a little dramatic and operatic world

around him. This theatre was under the direction of the Chevalier von Rohr; and operatic or dramatic performances took place there twice a week. Concerts of classical music were there given also. Free admission was granted to all. On some occasions, only, money was demanded for charitable purposes; and on these nights especially, crowds flocked from far and near to do honour to the duke, who smiled with pride to witness such proofs of the high fame of his admirable and far-prized establishment. In truth, both orchestra and company were excellent; and in its small proportions the institution was one of the most perfect of its kind in Germany. The affable, kindly, enthusiastic devotee of music,—whose spirit, joined to that of his amiable duchess, herself a distinguished musician, swayed this genial undertaking,—had heard Carl Maria play, and marked his talent as conductor; and he had not forgotten the pleasure the brilliant youth had given him. Of this fact Fräulein von Belonde was aware; and she urged the young man to appeal to this genuine and noble Mæcenas of art for his patronage and protection in some form or other.

Carl Maria was then on the point of undertaking his venturesome journey: his passport was already in his pocket. No better idea struck him than that the duke, by conferring on him some nominal and titular function, connected with his musical institute in Carlsruhe, might bestow on him a distinction which might be of advantage to him in his wanderings. A petition to this effect was forwarded to the

duke by the interposition of Carl Maria's fair young protectress. But this application was again nigh ruined by the misplaced "fine-gentleman" notions of the boastful Franz Anton, who, it would seem, could find nothing better to do than to insert some high-flown phrases about the distinguished nobility of the Weber family. The duke's answer was favourable and complimentary. He bestowed upon the youth the title of his own "Musical Director;" but expressly, as the formal diploma had it, on account of his own distinguished talent alone, and "in no manner whatever on account of his family, of which no consideration was taken." Spite of this little sharp reproof, however, the feelings of the duke towards the struggling genius were of the most kindly. A proof of this was yet to come.

The position of Carl Maria grew more and more distressing. The results of the French victories in Austria and Southern Germany rendered all his plans of travel vain. The tide of war was fast advancing. Alarm took possession of all minds in Breslau. Retrenchment and retirement were the order of the day; lessons in music ceased altogether: and the poor youth was now in bitter want. Difficulties were even increased by the arrival of Aunt Adelheid, who had fled in alarm from Munich, for greater protection by the side of her male relatives. Under these circumstances Duke Eugen and his excellent wife offered Carl Maria an asylum for an unlimited period in their palace at Carlsruhe, in such wise too, as though the favour were bestowed on

them. But Carl Maria had too much innate tact of heart not to feel how much he was their debtor, and not to offer his services as artist or conductor, whenever he could be made useful, without a thought of remuneration. The good duke did more. Scarcely had Carl Maria arrived, during the autumn of 1806, at that little ducal nest of song, so quaintly perched on a forest branch, when, having learned that the youth's old father and his aunt had been left behind in Breslau in most wretched circumstances, he insisted on their being immediately summoned too, and provided for with care. A ray of sunlight had thus in truth smiled down upon Carl Maria through his darkest clouds; and now, for a time at least, he was able to glide down the stream of life in peace, fanned by a pleasant air, seeing his dreams of a true artist's best existence shaping themselves into realities. There is no doubt that the period spent by him in that little quaint but brilliant Silesian residence was one which he could always look back upon as a brilliant spot in his chequered and troubled life. He himself was accustomed to speak of this time as "a golden dream;" when, with a heart lightened of life's cares, he felt "a fresh spring of music gushing up within him like a fairy fountain."

Life at the court of the original and amiable prince was not without that stiffness and formality indigenous to all German courts; but it was gay and lively. Carl Maria resided as a guest in one of the houses arranged for the ducal household before the palace-gates; his old father and aunt being provided

for in a dwelling close at hand. His breakfast was brought him by the ducal lackeys; but at dinner he was an expected and ever-welcome guest at the palace; and there in the evening he was always one of the court-party assembled round the tea-table or the piano of the good duchess, and one of the brightest ornaments of that clever little musical coterie. Theatrical rehearsals and performances occupied much time. But the greatest charm of this charming little court of the Muses lay in the evenings passed in the more select family circle, when music, wit, female fascination, amiability, and fine feeling all combined, under the guidance of that clever, excellent, friendly worshipper of art and artist's talent, the Duke Eugen, to throw especial lustre on an existence devoted to some of the choicest aspirations of humanity.

As may be well understood, the productive powers of Carl Maria blossomed luxuriously under such sunny auspices. The young composer was never happier than when he laid some new composition on the music-desk of the ever-grateful Duke or Duchess, or distributed the parts of some new work among the members of the orchestra; never better pleased than when he listened to the judgment of the eminent artists by whom he was surrounded, or entered into friendly discussion with them on the merits of each last production. A fresh stamp was given to his talent during this happy time. The favourite composer, the idol, the demigod of Duke Eugen was Joseph Haydn; and the constant execution of the works of this great master doubtless exercised a

notable influence on the form and nature of the compositions which now flowed from Carl Maria's unfettered pen, and determined, in the progressive development of his genius, a step which departed considerably from the ground he had trodden during the Breslau period. The principal of these compositions were two symphonies, both written in the space of six weeks; one seemingly for the purpose of displaying the talent of Dantrevaux, a famous horn-player then attached to the ducal orchestra; the other, in all probability, in honour of the Duke himself, who was a distinguished virtuoso on the oboe. The former of the two works still bears some traces of the style of Vogler; the second, simpler in construction, and yet even richer in melody, seems to have been inspired by Haydn alone. Both, although somewhat over-laboured and tortured in the instrumentation, are so replete with charming and sweet melodies, and with original effects of harmony, that to this day they delight all hearers by their youthful freshness, however much musical periwigs may shake their obstinate old heads.

But "all that's bright must fade." This period was far too bright to last. The harmonious circle was suddenly broken up in the month of September 1806 by a summons to the Duke to join the army, where shortly afterwards a corps fell to his command. In the hope that the campaign would not be of long duration the Duchess remained behind at Carlsruhe, and kept her beloved husband's favourite company together. But the winter only passed amidst the

saddest doubts and fears. Continued misfortune attended the Prussian arms. The French were in Berlin and Warsaw. The Duchess, however, would not allow the Webers to quit her little court; her hospitality never for a moment flinched. At last the results of the battle of Eylau, the fall of Dantzic, the battle of Friedland, began to tell heavily not only on the political, but the social state of Germany. A deadly blight fell upon the whole country. It was impossible any longer to support the artistic establishment at Carlsruhe; the company was dispersed. But the Duke had too kind a heart not to use all his efforts to find a future provision for all the members of his artistic corps. When their talents could not be rendered available in their own sphere, they were in many cases temporarily bestowed in situations,—frequently the most incongruous and unfitted,—in the civil service or in private houses, any where, every where, till better times should come.

Among the most helpless of all these sufferers by the misfortunes of the times was poor Carl Maria. He saw the "golden dream" suddenly vanish like a bright summer rainbow, to leave the darkness deeper than ever around him. Not only would want now stare him in the face, but his poor old father, his old aunt, would look to him for their support. From the earliest times he had always hated the insolent conquerors of his country, with their invincible but pitiless hero at their head. But now the misery they entailed struck home to himself; and when he saw Germany divided against Germany, at the beck of

the invader, and German brother hand to hand in bitter strife with German brother, his hatred grew to an intensity which preyed upon his mind. Later it found vent in song burning with patriotic fire. But, in the fearful turmoil and oppression of those days, scenes of such misery soon passed before his very eyes, that his once happy home in Carlsruhe became intolerable to him, in his state of nervous irritation. In and around Carlsruhe lay the Würtemberg troops, then in alliance with the French. They were commanded by that military monster, Vandamme, whose pleasure and whose pride it seemed to be, to urge on his German troops to a pitch of unbridled licentiousness and savage barbarity which might exceed the excesses of the French, make them, if possible, still more abhorrent to their own countrymen than the foreigner, and enable him to answer all the lamentations of the wretched inhabitants with a grim smile, and the jeering words, "*Que voulez-vous? Ce sont vos compatriotes!*" No more fearful a band of murdering robbers ever devastated a country than these German troops in their own land. Quartering a Würtemberger and utter ruin became synonymous terms to the miserable Silesians. It is true that, although Duke Eugen was serving in the Prussian army as a general, his private property, as a Würtemberg prince, was respected by these marauders. But day by day the palace was crowded by unhappy wretches from the country round, weeping over the loss of all their goods; mourning their murdered relatives; calling vainly for vengeance

for their dishonoured wives, daughters, and sisters. Carl Maria's heart was wrung; he could bear the misery no longer. But what was to be done? All hopes of earning his livelihood by his art were lost to him. The time was not yet come when public feeling would become accustomed to the horror and confusion of the strife; when men would dance and sing to the music of the cannon; when theatres would be crowded on the very evening of the day that battle had raged in the streets; when artists would gather great receipts in a town which was one huge hospital, with thousands of corpses lying unburied at its gates. And at that hour what was to be done for Carl Maria in his need?

The good Duke had not forgotten him. Even in the midst of the tumult of events he had communicated on the subject with his brothers, the King of Würtemberg and Duke Ludwig. As Carl Maria's guiding-star then willed it—a bright star, to light him into a haven of rest, it then appeared—an evil star it proved, however—Duke Ludwig had just then been deprived of his private secretary by promotion in the royal service, and offered to appoint the young man so highly recommended by his brother, and of noble birth moreover, to the vacant post. Such a position might be a mine of wealth; in Carl Maria's eyes it was just then a welcome livelihood.

In starting from that miserable Carlsruhe young Weber was obliged to leave father and aunt for a time behind him. He hastened to Breslau to fetch certain papers left there; and in the confusion of

affairs, owing to the war, he was enabled to pass ten days there, unmolested by his numerous creditors. With that elastic feeling which was the privilege of his joyous youth, he even shook off all memory of the misery which had so long weighed upon him, and spent again, amidst old acquaintances, some of those jovial evenings which but scarce escaped the term of bacchanalian orgies. The ears of his creditors were at last awakened by the noisy mirth, however; and on the 6th of March he was obliged to quit the town furtively at early dawn.

He had time at his command before entering upon his new position, it would seem; for he journeyed slowly by the way of Dresden, Leipsic, Bayreuth, Nuremberg, and Anspach; now hunting up old friends; now striving to give concerts; failing at one time in his efforts, succeeding at another. At last, on the 17th of July, he reached Stuttgart, the place where he was doomed to pass some of the most wretched hours of his life, in expiating cruelly deeds of levity and indiscretion, and in suffering the unmerited harshness of gross tyranny. Here, too, one of the great changes of life awaited him. From youth he was to ripen into settled manhood.

CHAPTER VI.

WURTEMBERG AND ITS CAPITAL IN 1807.

In order fully to understand the events which rendered Carl Maria's sojourn at Stuttgart one of the most remarkable periods of his life, it is necessary that some idea should be given of the extraordinary stage on which these events were acted.

For a long and weary series of years Würtemberg had groaned under the oppression of Duke Carl; and vain appeals had been made to the tribunal of the Emperor for the restoration of the Constitution, of which the country had been despoiled by that ruthless sovereign. The imperial verdict had at last been given in favour of the people's rights; and Würtemberg had again seen its constitution restored, but at a heavy price. This boon had been obtained only through incessant bribery of the officials at Vienna. Millions had flowed from the strong-boxes of the country into the pockets of every possible government-officer of the Emperor, until the good people of Würtemberg had accustomed themselves to see unlawful gold paid and received for unlawful or even lawful service, and to look upon corruption as a legi-

timate, or at all events a necessary, state of things. Thus when Duke Carl encouraged his rascally ministers in their abominable traffic of all government appointments, and clutched the lion's share of the spoil into his own hands, all proper feeling of right and wrong had been already crushed in his people's hearts, and their natural sense of the infamy of bribery and corruption had been lost in the all-absorbing fact of general practice. The reckless extravagance of Duke Carl had played its part, too, towards the common moral degradation of the country. The revenues of the state had been squandered in mad military expeditions; in hunting excursions of long duration, when miles upon miles of land were devastated and wildernesses created, without a thought of compensation,—when the peasant was forced into the service of the Duke's pleasures, and sank or perished under the cruel labour; in the gorgeous splendours of his theatre; in his luxurious ballet, in which Vestris alone received 10,000 florins salary; in the wondrous scenery and machinery of the stage, on which the great scene-painter Columba was employed at a remuneration as extravagant; in wild caprices, such as the warming of whole lakes in winter for the ducal duck-shooting; in the absurdly lavish magnificence of a court, where princes bowed as courtiers, and the noblest ladies flaunted as high-priestesses of pleasure; in equipages; in orange-houses; in mythological fêtes; in displays of fire-works,—the least of which had cost its tons of gold. The people groaned, the middle classes hung their

heads in shame and despair. Courtiers and favourites alone grinned with exultation, as they in turn clutched the stray spoils of the shameless oppression, and made their rich profits out of their Judas-trade with the very blood and marrow of the land. Corruption had become the idol of the day, and all who could draw near the temple had bowed down to it and worshipped.

True, the restoration of the Constitution by the imperial will of that enemy of all oppression, the Emperor Joseph II., backed by the remonstrances of Prussia, Denmark, and England, had somewhat cleared the atmosphere of the deadly political malaria which had poisoned the whole duchy; and the singular influence of Franziska von Bernardin had gradually softened down the asperities of character in the savage Duke, and even led him to the recognition of the possible existence of good, and to something like a repentance for the past. Under her mild guiding hand the uproar of the court had been hushed; courtiers had been allowed no more to play at pitch-and-toss with millions wrung from the people; the famous hunting expeditions had no longer tortured the land; the bitter babble of the priests had been hushed; the service had been read in the palace chapel in plain German; and that great institution, the celebrated Carlschule, had been founded. But the change had come too late. The cancer of corruption had preyed too deeply on the very vitals of the land to be eradicated now. The conscience of a people had been too profoundly crushed for them to see at once the dis-

honour of such practices as the sale of justice or injustice in high market-place. To open their eyes from their blindness, and show them this dishonour in its true hideous form, was a purpose which had been far from the thoughts of Duke Carl's successor, the bigot Ludwig Eugen, who had brought back the crawling plague of Capuchin monks, had suppressed the Carlschule, had performed penances and pilgrimages; but, fortunately for himself, had died in 1795, before his dreaded "Incarnation of the Antichrist," the French Revolution, knocked rudely for admission at his palace-gates.

The rightly-thinking had seen a sun of hope for the land dawn in the accession to power of Duke Friedrich Eugen, who had been a hero among the heroes of Friedrich the Great. He had, in truth, given the greatest promise of being the future father of his people. He might have been the man to recall the true good old spirit of honest Würtemberg to life once more, by the infusion of his own true spirit. But the invading tide of the revolutionary armies in the land had swamped for the time his efforts for internal reform; and then came death to extinguish the light of his rising star for ever! Hopes had been again awakened in all good hearts, however, when men thought to see the inheritance of the paternal virtues in his son Friedrich, who mounted the ducal throne in 1797, freely took his solemn oath to preserve the Constitution, wisely restricted the overweening privileges of the nobles, raised the condition of the middle classes, accepted as a theory the pro-

gress of the age, and gave the world to believe that in him had arisen a prince in whom Duty, Honour, Trust, might have been the watchwords of the land. How bitterly had these hopes been deceived!

Duke Friedrich, on his accession to the ducal throne, had a life rich in experiences of many kinds behind him. He had served the great Catharine of Russia, but without any advantage to the better qualities of his heart; had left his wife, a princess of Brunswick, in Petersburg; and in his intercourse with Cossack hettmans and semi-barbarian princes and officers, had adopted those brutal habits which, in later life, earned him the bitter hate of all around him. He had travelled through France, regardless of the raging conflagration of the revolution; had finally settled in Würtemberg, in spite of the savage Duke Carl, who feared his energy; and in the year of his accession to the throne had married, as his second wife, Charlotte Matilda Augusta, princess of England, and daughter of George III. He had not long seized the reins of power, when he had altogether changed the tone in which he had at first addressed his "beloved people." He had announced himself as head and master, had declared that right existed only in his grace and favour. During the breaking out of the war between France and Austria, he had at first dismissed with ignominy his ministers, who counselled a neutrality; had sent Batz, the advocate of the people's rights at Vienna, in chains to the fortress of Hohenasberg; and had then fled before the victorious armies of Moreau and Vandamme, with all his trea-

sures and valuables, to Erlangen. He had even obtained, by the most cunning diplomacy, on the peace of Luneville, the electoral dignity, besides an ample indemnity for his loss of territory on the left bank of the Rhine. But a change had come in his policy. His autocratic notions had been wonderfully tickled by that arch designer Napoleon, whom he had received at Ludwigsburg on the 2d October 1804, and who had won him over to his cause by the coarsest flattery, spite of the contempt and hatred the proud Duke felt for the new Emperor as a low-born parvenu. In return for his adherence to the Confederation of the Rhine, he had received, from the conquering master of all, the outlying Austrian domains in Suabia, and the title of King!

King Friedrich had announced his new dignity to his wondering subjects with immense pomp, having, only two days before, revoked the Constitution, packed off to their homes the Assembly of the Estates, and taken all the treasures and archives of that body into his own possession. The country had seen in terror and dismay its long-established rights crushed by the despotic will of their new self-appointed autocrat, and had shuddered before the return of the worst days of his ruthless predecessor, the Duke Carl.

Seldom has a prince been judged so differently as King Friedrich of Würtemberg. Seldom, most assuredly, has a monarch been so universally hated by subjects of every kind and degree as he was. It is very difficult to paint a clear unbiassed picture of the man. That he far surpassed his dreaded uncle Carl

in natural genius, in talent and acquirements, and in far-sighted discernment, cannot be doubted; but he surpassed him, too, in coarseness, harshness, and ruthless dealing with his subjects. True it is, also, that his political views were far keener than those of his Estates; that the Constitution of the country was antiquated in form, and unsatisfactory in its working. But what did he give in return for this Constitution, such as it was, and for the indifferent laws the Estates enacted, insufficient as they might be? Only the government of his own ruthless will. For the oppression of the patrician and clerical orders, he substituted the far more galling oppression of his coarse soldiery, his unworthy favourites, and his absurdly organised official hierarchy. Surely it was a step from bad to worse! Again were places sold to incapable creatures of his preference, from whom the country shrank as from evil spirits, or bestowed in a manner still more shameful. The judgments of his tribunals became mere forms; punishments were generally increased in rigour by the royal will. Taxes were imposed and enforced at royal pleasure. Police regulations, the severity of which was meant to throw a mask over the utter demoralisation of the time, were intrusted to instruments who had obtained their posts by the darkest bye-paths, and executed their duty in the most odious ways. New monopolies were created. The property of the Universities was absorbed by the State, although new professorships were created, and some of the most distinguished professors of the day received their patent of nobility.

Military conscription was carried on with a brutality, from which none were exempt as heretofore,—except, indeed, persons immediately attached to the royal service,—a brutality to which the harshest ordinances of Friedrich the Great were child's-play. The reckless hunting-expeditions of Duke Carl were again revived with all their cruel rigours, their terrors, and their devastations. In every commonest affair of daily life, —in marriages, in choice of schools, in journeyings to and fro,—the royal will and permission ruled and directed all.

King Friedrich of Würtemberg never, perhaps, raised his horse to the Consulate; but he systematically lowered even the highest of the land, who were not in his service, to a rank below his lowest menials. No man could venture to pass before the gates of the royal palaces in Stuttgart or Ludwigsburg without humbly taking off his hat, even in the wildest weather. If any dared to sin against this ordinance, which out-gesslered Gessler, the sentinels were instructed to strike their hats from their heads.

The royal court, whether at Stuttgart or Ludwigsburg, was brilliant in the extreme. King Friedrich loved pomp, show, and glitter. Court-officers there were in unlimited numbers, and of every description. Of chamberlains alone, 300 swarmed in the apartments of the luxurious monarch. A conspicuous feature was formed by the hosts of handsome young fellows, in semi-official posts, as pages and younkers, with whom the King loved to associate; and who, after brief service, were generally

rewarded with lucrative appointments and patents of nobility. The palaces were spangled too, like flower-gardens, with the brilliant uniforms of the young officers of the Garde du Corps, Chevaux Legers, and the other four guard regiments of the King's ridiculously expensive army. They rang, from day to night, with music, with mirth, with the uproar of the unseemly pranks of spoiled pages, in whose loose tone and manners his majesty was wont to take exuberant delight.

Friedrich had an especial predilection for exercising his sovereign rights in the distribution of patents of nobility. These favours, as well as the highest posts, were generally bestowed on adventurers from other parts of Germany. It naturally followed that, whilst the King himself was feared and unloved, his ministers and favourites were hated and despised. The most remarkable, but, at the same time, the lowest and most contemptible of these detested favourites, was a General Count von Dillen, who, from a groom in the ducal stables, had risen from rank to rank, overwhelmed with honours, without one single recommendation either in military or administrative service. Dillen was the evil genius of the King. His influence over Friedrich was enormous; and, strong in this high favour, he was accustomed to enrich himself, with open shamelessness, by the lucrative trade of selling government appointments. He even invented a new method of raising money, which was afterwards carried on surreptitiously by many persons about the court of Würtemberg,

and which consisted in selling to young men nominal appointments at court, which alone would free them from the military conscription. The fact of this practice was doomed to exercise a fearful influence on the fortunes of Carl Maria.

One word more as to the personality of a man with whom, for his woe, the young composer was destined to come in contact. The King was awfully fat; and his unwieldy corpulence increased so frightfully from year to year, that, even in 1807, a semicircular space was cut in his dining-tables to permit him to approach near enough to feed himself. His face was pale; his bloated cheeks fell heavily on his fourfold chin. His eyes were small, but bright and lively; his mouth was not without expression; and his smile was even genial and pleasant. He spoke much and rapidly, at times with brilliancy and wit; but quite as frequently in a tone of coarse jocosity, not unmixed with filth. His anger was terrible, maniacal in its demonstration. But his affection was even more to be dreaded than his rage.

Next in rank to the King stood his brother, Prince Ludwig Friedrich Alexander, who in 1807 was fifty-one years of age, and who had arrived about that period, after seeing his hopes of becoming King of Poland utterly destroyed, to live at the court of Stuttgart with his wife, a princess of Nassau-Weilburg, and his young family. He led a dissolute and expensive life, was continually appealing to the purse of his royal brother, with whom, on that account, he was in a permanent state of antagonism; and yet was

always in the most painful pecuniary embarrassments, to escape from which he frequently resorted to the most desperate measures. It was for this reason, perhaps, that he demeaned himself to affect the most intimate friendship with the unworthy favourite Dillen. Less coarsely passionate and demonstrative than his brother, he was at the same time less open and sincere in love or hate; and he was constantly engaged in misty intrigues, either to attain his ends or to conceal his delinquencies from a brother whose anger he feared. Unlike his amiable and excellent brother Eugen, he had no love for music, and only visited the opera for the sake of the pretty women he might see. This was the prince into whose service Carl Maria von Weber entered, on the 1st August 1807.

Thus, then, was the fiery young artist, his wild oats not yet fully sown, plunged into a new world, where no true sense of right or wrong was known; where virtue and morality were laughed to scorn; where, in the chaotic whirlpool of a reckless court, money and influence at any price were the sole ends and aims of life; where, in the confusion of the times, the insecurity of all conditions, and the ruthless despotism of the government, the sole watchword of existence, from high to low, was "*Après nous le déluge!*"

It has been necessary to present this somewhat lengthy description of the condition of the court of Stuttgart at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as a prologue to the drama of Carl Maria's life in the

capital of Würtemberg. Through a picture of such a state of society alone can it be shown how the events, which flung a blighting shadow upon the otherwise so brilliant surface of his noble character throughout existence, sprang up as the natural rank produce of the impure soil which he was now destined to tread, unwary, and unheeding its corruption.

It was on the 19th August 1807, that Carl Maria first paid his respects to his new patron at Ludwigsburg. Probably from the very first there was a feeling the reverse of sympathy between the two. But the young man had been recommended to the Duke as active and intelligent; and the Prince had just then no choice. To the ardent young artist his new duties were utterly uncongenial: no one study of his past life had fitted him for such a service as that of private secretary to a royal duke, and comptroller of a ducal household. Yet such were his new titles, such his new avocations. The Duke kept a tolerably imposing court of his own. The family consisted of the Princess his wife; his son by his first marriage with a Princess Czartoriska; the Prince Adam, a tall, noisy, arrogant stripling of fifteen; and five young children by his second marriage. The household was made up, besides the higher officers and ladies, of a host of paid and unpaid servants and strange on-hangers, some of whom were destined to play a part in the young musician's own drama. As secretary, Carl Maria had not only to undertake the private correspondence of the Prince, but sundry far from agreeable personal communications with people

of rank, and the numerous herd of creditors. As comptroller, he had to regulate the expenses of the household, manage the Duke's privy purse, and keep the books of receipts and expenses. A strange mass are the books, still extant. They say but little for Carl Maria's talent as a book-keeper; but they speak volumes as regards the Duke's private life. The chief expenses lie in sums paid for horses, dogs, hunting-parties, journeys, play-debts, wine, endless pensions and allowances of very doubtful origin. Enormous sums are noted only in undecipherable hieroglyphics. Each month's account ends with a fresh deficit, for which a new loan is rendered imperative; and for each recurring negotiation poor Carl Maria has to be employed, often under the most distressing conditions.

The business the most disagreeable, and certainly the most dangerous for a young man, was his daily communication with petitioners for favours, or clients on private matters of a questionable kind. Temptation lay ever in his path in the circle of which he now formed the centre,—a flattering, fawning set, that never looked too closely at the means of catering for his favour; a crowd, in which not only high-placed civil and military servants, but even members of the royal house, thronged eagerly around him. Well may Carl Maria, as he cast despairing looks into the chaotic confusion of all the affairs, private and financial, of his patron, have felt in his heart of hearts that he, the inexperienced, ardent youth of one-and-twenty years, who had lived till then in the

atmosphere of art alone, was no Atlas to take such a world of ruin and corruption on his shoulders.

But the intercourse with purveyors, creditors, petitioners, money-lenders, and Jews, was not the most painful to which the youth had to submit. The King, as has been remarked, was in a chronic state of irritation against Duke Ludwig, on account of his dissolute life and reckless expenditure. He could shut his eyes to his own excesses; but those of his brother were unpardonable. Besides, after every controversy, it was he who had to pay all debts, in order to save the honour of the family. When these collisions took place, it was the young secretary who had, only too often, to beard the lion in his den. Some of the darkest hours of his life were those passed in the cabinet of the dreaded monarch. When private secretary Von Weber was commissioned to lay before the King some very desperate condition of affairs, in which his helping hand was needed to fill an empty treasury, or avert the consequences of a compromising scrape, it was the custom of majesty to burst into an immoderate fit of passion, and vent the foulest abuse on the unlucky head of the innocent messenger. On such occasions Friedrich let forth a torrent of words, and allowed nobody to speak but himself; reasoning or representation were wholly out of the question. The stammering, stuttering, shrieking rage of the hideously-corpulent King, who, on account of his unwieldy obesity, was unable to let his arms hang by his side, and who thus gesticulated wildly, and perspired incessantly, and had

the habit, moreover, of continually addressing his favourite, generally present on these occasions, with the appeal, "*Pas vrai, Dillen?*" between each broken sentence,—would have been inexpressibly droll, had not the low-comedy actor of the scene been an autocrat who might, at a wink, have transformed laughter into tears. But there was a demoniacal comicality about the performance, which, if it did not convulse the spectator, made him shudder to his heart's core.

Weber hated the King, of whose wild caprice and vices he witnessed daily scenes, before whose palace-gates he was obliged to slink bareheaded, and who treated him with unmerited ignominy. Sceptre and crown had never been imposing objects in his eyes, unless worn by a worthy man; and, consequently, he was wont, in thoughtless levity of youth, to forget the dangers he ran, and to answer the King with a freedom of tone which the autocrat was all unused to hear. In turn he was detested by the monarch. As negotiator for the spendthrift Prince Ludwig, he was already obnoxious enough; and it sometimes happened that, by way of variety to the customary torrent of invective, the King, after keeping the secretary for hours in his ante-chamber, would receive him only to turn him rudely out of the room, without hearing a word of what he had to say.

The royal treatment roused young Carl Maria's indignation to the utmost; and his irritation led him one day to a mad prank, which was nigh resulting in some years' imprisonment in the fortress of Hohenasberg, or of Hohenhaufen. Smarting under some foul

indignity, he had just left the private apartment of the King, when an old woman met him in the passage, and asked where she could find the room of the court washerwoman. "There!" said the reckless youth, pointing to the door of the royal cabinet. The old woman entered, was violently assailed by the King, who had a horror of old women, and, in her terror, stammered out that a young gentleman who had just come out had informed her that there she would find the "royal washerwoman." The infuriated monarch guessed who was the culprit, and dispatched an officer on the spot to arrest his brother's secretary, and throw him into prison.

To those who have any idea how foul a den was then a royal prison, it must appear almost marvellous that Carl Maria should have possessed sufficient equanimity to have occupied himself with his beloved art during his arrest. But so it was. He managed to procure a dilapidated old piano, put it in tune with consummate patience, by means of a common door-key, and actually, then and there, on the 14th October 1808, composed his well-known beautiful song, "Ein steter Kampf ist unser Leben."

The storm passed over. Prince Ludwig's influence obtained the young man's pardon and release. But the insult was never forgotten by the King: he took care to remember it at his own right time. Nor had prison cured Carl Maria of his boyish desire to play tricks upon the hated monarch, when he conceived that he could do so without danger to himself. He contrived to insert adroitly into the

letters which his duty called upon him to write from Duke Ludwig to his royal brother, and which the former was too careless to read, every expression which he knew would be likely to put the irritable monarch into a fearful passion. For a time he succeeded admirably in his design. But Friedrich was too sharp a man not to divine the real author of these abominable letters; and many were the back-handed blows which the revengeful man was able to strike, in quiet malice, at the imprudent young secretary.

But Carl Maria's life in Stuttgart was not wholly so unpleasant and so uncongenial as it might seem. After many vain, but honest, endeavours to cleanse the Augean stable of finance in the ducal affairs,—endeavours which were only rewarded by the unfriendly rebuke, on the part of his patron, that "he had better not meddle with matters that did not concern him,"—he stuck to the strict letter of his service alone, and now gained time and opportunity for not only coquetting once more with his favourite Muse, but for winning himself new friends by the seductive charm of his manners, as well as by his talent. He found means to cultivate the acquaintance of many distinguished personages and agreeable families in Stuttgart, to reckon many of the officers and artists among his stanch allies, and also to enjoy life after his fashion, in jovial gatherings of good fellows, with his glass of wine and his guitar. The faculty for finding himself in his right place in every kind of society, and gathering from all around new food to

add to his store of instruction, talent, or humour, was one of the most attractive qualities of Carl Maria's nature.

All outward progress of intelligence at this period of the history of Stuttgart, if not wholly suppressed, was at all events nullified by the tyrannical oppression of the government, and the unhappy condition of the country. But in the family circles into which Carl Maria was introduced by Prince Ludwig's physician-in-ordinary, Doctor Kellin, the cultivation of the mind and the interests of art were far from being wholly neglected. From his intercourse with literary and artistic celebrities he now began to derive fresh advantages. Among the former, he could enjoy the conversation of the brilliant, witty Haug, the editor of the still-flourishing paper, *Das Morgenblatt*, and of the clever, clear-thinking Reinbeck; from both of whom he was so fortunate as to obtain the words of some of his brightest and sweetest compositions. Among the latter,—and they were many in every branch of art,—he had the privilege of sitting in the studio of the famous sculptor Dannecker, at that time already nearly fifty years of age, and of watching the progress of his celebrated Ariadne. About the same time also he made the passing acquaintance of Louis Spohr, even then one of Germany's greatest violin-players and composers; who, as has been already stated, judged the fragments of the boy's "Rubezahl" with little favour, but yet gave fresh animation to his aspirations and his hopes.

It was the first time that Carl Maria had been

permitted to enjoy an uninterrupted intercourse with men of such importance and distinction in the fine arts and literature. He gazed up with as much surprise as admiration at this higher sphere of intellectual cultivation, in general so superior to that of the musical and theatrical worthies with whom his lot had as yet been cast. His ambition was awakened, and his aspirations to achieve the good and great gradually gushed forth in this world so new to him; although the channel in which they were to flow, in order to reach the desired end, was as yet but half revealed to him. He now began to turn a great portion of his leisure hours to account in the cultivation of his mind; and, with this intent, to improve his acquaintance with Court-Counseller Lehr, the director of the royal library; a modest, thoughtful, but amiable and genial man, from whose poetical effusions the young composer afterwards selected the words of two of his choicest songs. From Lehr he derived the most valuable hints for the improvement of his style, his habits of thought, and the direction of his critical and philosophical studies. Under the good librarian's guidance, he read Kant, Wolff, and Schelling, with care; and thus gained that precious faculty, so often half-envied, half-repudiated by his colleagues, of reasoning with logical clearness, and of giving correct expression to his thoughts. In this much Carl Maria's sojourn in Stuttgart was of the highest importance in the development of his better qualities, however much in other respects it may have exercised an influence altogether deleterious.

His youthful blood, which had been first fevered in Vienna, and had mounted to boiling point in Breslau, had not yet cooled down. The consequences of all his debts, his love-adventures, and his follies, may have grinned at him hideously sometimes, but had not yet scourged him to the quick, when he arrived in Stuttgart; and the licentiousness, corruption, and laxity of honourable principle which ran riot in that city could only tend to crush, in the mind of an ardent impressionable youth, all sense of duty, all moral discipline, all clear insight into the difference between right ignored and wrong permitted. The reserved and retiring life of family circles was not of a nature wholly to content the impetuous young artist, especially with the example before him of all the young officers and court-gallants of his acquaintance, with whom drinking, toying, gambling, money-lavishing, and debt-making were only evidences of *bon ton*, and in whom the high example of king and prince not only permitted, but even necessitated the wildest excesses; inasmuch as moral rectitude and steadiness would have been looked upon as indirect admonitions of the most suspicious and objectionable nature, launched against the rulers of the land. Carl Maria, then, was soon engulfed in the whirlpool of such society. Jovial parties in the so-called "drink-rooms" of the palace, at the "King of England," in the summer "Wine-Gardens" of Schwieberdingen or Kannstadt, were the order of the day among the reckless crew, the leading band of which proudly bore the title of "Faust's Ride to Hell."

Among these choice spirits was one who, both as man and artist, was destined to come into nearer connexion with Carl Maria. This was Franz Carl Hiemer, a young author. His experiences of life had been considerable. He had been by turns officer and actor; and his knowledge of the stage, combined with some degree of talent and a lively turn of mind, had led him to write dramatic pieces, more generally adapted from the French. With his joyous nature, and his open heart, he was sure to please the open-hearted joyous Carl Maria, although by nine years his senior. Without any great judgment for the poetical worth of an operatic drama,—a deficiency which, even in the maturity of his genius, still remained in him,—the young musician saw in Hiemer the man to provide him with a libretto, which might inspire him to fresh operatic composition. He gave into Hiemer's hands the old book of the dumb forest-girl, who recovers her speech through the influence of love, by the Chevalier Steinsberg. It was originally only an indifferent affair; but out of this stuff the author set to work to produce a new opera-book. Although not devoid of exciting and effective situations, Hiemer's new production turned out weak in invention of detail, poor in dialogue, nonsensical in the comic portion, and crude in versification; altogether a glorious specimen of a thoroughly unartistic romantic German opera-book. Strange to say, Weber was quite enamoured of this literary abortion, and felt himself inspired by the subject. By the middle of the year 1808 he had already completed several

pieces of the opera, which was now to bear the title of "Sylvana." The composition did not progress very rapidly, however. The wild flood of the reckless existence into which he had plunged bore him hither and thither in its course. The evenings were few when, after the more reputable intercourse with society in the pleasant court-circle of the Duchess, in private families, and among graver artists, he was not led to "finish off" with the gallant roysterers of "Faust's Ride to Hell;" fewer still when the excitable youth could snatch any quiet hours of meditation and repose of mind. From time to time the irrepressible love of his art, and the strong yearning for its exercise, drew him, spite all other allurements, to his piano; but although the voice of his own genius could not be wholly stilled, it was seldom heeded. From his friend Hiemer too, a lazy careless fellow, who led a life even more dissolute than his own, he was unable to drag out fresh pages of manuscript without the greatest difficulty, and after repeated humorous letters of entreaty. And thus it was that "Sylvana," first taken in hand in November 1807, was never completed until the month of February 1810.

It must not be supposed, however, that Carl Maria's artistic development was lying fallow during this period of his Stuttgart life. A tiller of the ground there was, who perhaps did more for the future harvest of genius than any other man, into whose influential care the culture of the youth's talent was destined to fall, not even excepting Vo-

gler. He was not one of the great pioneers of art; but he was a man to awaken creative genius, to point out the true path it should run, and by his own example of unwearied activity to urge it on to that greatness which it was not his own to attain. This individual was Franz Danzi, who a few months after Weber's arrival in Stuttgart had been appointed conductor of the Royal Opera.

Danzi had been attached to the opera at Munich at the time of Franz Anton's residence there with his boy Carl Maria. But no acquaintance with this genial musician, who was considerably overshadowed then by Peter Winter, had been made at that period. But Danzi had not been long in Stuttgart when his sharp and unerring judgment saw the great promise in the youth; and he sought his friendship and his confidence. Although Danzi was at least three-and-twenty years the senior of the young composer, the middle-aged man soon captivated the youth by his kindliness of heart and unaffected interest. A reciprocal admiration and affection ensued; and Danzi was soon zealously employed in eager efforts to give a right direction to Carl Maria's genius. "To be a true artist, you must be a true man," was one of his great maxims. His affectionate counsel was of the greatest importance to the youth, not only in his musical tendencies, but in all relations with the world outside the sphere of art. He was resolved that his young friend should be as a musician great, but great too as a man.

As a musician Danzi left ineffaceable traces upon

Weber's style. He was a thorough and pure disciple of the school of Manheim, where he had been born, and where he had first prosecuted his musical studies. The especial tendency of this school was to establish the importance of "song" and rhythm in instrumentalism; and it is undeniable that Carl Maria dated from the period of his intimate intercourse with Danzi, that important change in the style of his orchestral compositions which gave such prominence in them to that rich flood of "song and rhythm" so conspicuous in his later works of genius, and hitherto so unknown to him. But the influence of Danzi as a musician, great as it was, was even subordinate to that which he exercised, in all the more important matters of life, as a man. It is not too much to say that he was the good angel of the youth at this important period of his life. With firm, though mild and gentle hand, he seized the reins of friendship, and exerted all his directing powers to stem that wild career in which Carl Maria's genius, if not utterly lost, might have acquired that stamp of recklessness and disorder which never might have been effaced. He brought to bear all the natural influence of the mature man over the still undeveloped character of youth, to complete that cultivation of the mind, for which Carl Maria was then evidencing true aspirations, although uncertain and fitful in their character. But Danzi was no pedant and no cross-grained marrer of youthful pleasure. The little plump man, with his round head and sharp, clever, good-tempered eyes, might be seen on many a joyous

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country excursion in the environs of Stuttgart, hand-in-hand with the liveliest of the youth of the time; although he may have shaken that round head of his gravely at the stories of wild nights passed in pot-housing and uproar.

To Danzi Carl Maria addressed many of those humorous epistles in verse for which he became so famous, and with which, even in his days of bodily suffering and mental anguish, he was always wont to delight his laughing friends. Some of these are still extant, set to music with rare geniality and humour, and signed "Krautsalat," the nickname Carl Maria had adopted in the band of "Faust's Ride to Hell."

But during this life in Stuttgart a change had come in Carl Maria's position in the ducal household. Faber, the comptroller and bailiff of the prince, had returned from his post in the commissariat of the army, to be reinstated in his former situation; and the young secretary had found himself freed from many of his onerous duties. Long before this event his uncommon musical talent had found opportunity for appreciation; and his court-life forthwith received a more artistic colouring by his being appointed musical instructor to the children of the duke. Spite his own personal antipathy to his secretary, Prince Ludwig had still sense and impartiality enough to recognise the zeal evinced by the young man in the exercise of his painful mission, and in his endeavours to bring some light into the financial chaos of the house, as well as his general amiability and gentlemanly bearing. Without dismissing him from his position as private

secretary, therefore, he gladly occupied him with the musical supervision of the family. To this new position of the young composer are probably owing not only the "Six pièces à quatre mains," dedicated to the Princess Ludwig, but many others of his brilliant instrumental works belonging to this period. With the young amiable princesses, since Queen of Würtemberg and Margravine of Baden, the difficulties of the instructor's duties were only such as are usual with small children. With the young athletic, broad-shouldered, noisy stripling Prince Adam his task was a far harder one. Yet the boy, whose chief delight it was to make game of all around him, and play off the most disagreeable practical jokes, seems to have looked upon his young master with especial favour, and, beyond boxing the ears of the servants during his music-lessons—a mere unregarded trifle in those days—was generally "on his best behaviour" in Carl Maria's company. He was so fond of making music with the young artist, that he would frequently send over instruments, wax-candles, supper, plates and dishes, and above all, a whole regiment of bottles of wine, into Weber's small apartment in the palace, and then come and play with him for hours together, either alone, or accompanied by a few of his courtier friends. But these evenings, although commenced with all devotion to art, were not unwont to degenerate into veritable drinking-bouts. The young prince, on these occasions, when full of generous wine, had the habit of giving away costly presents, and making brilliant

promises, of which he had no remembrance the next morning; and this vinous liberality was not unfrequently the cause of unseemly altercations between the prince and his friends, who invariably took care to remind him of his bounties. It was to Carl Maria's tact and adroitness that the task then always fell to reconcile all these princely differences.

What with the time bestowed on the functions of his office, his life at court, his life with the choice spirits of "Faust's Ride to Hell," and his own personal adventures on the field of love and beauty, it cannot be supposed that much progress was made during this period by the young composer in his true career. There is no doubt that he fostered the ambition to see his new opera of "Sylvana" represented at the Royal Theatre of Stuttgart. But here, again, hindrances arose to militate against any free and unfettered development of his own genius in his new work by the very care he took to suit exactly the personal qualities of the company, when brought into more frequent and intimate connexion with the various artists employed in the theatre; for into this sphere Danzi, by virtue of his position, had introduced him, in the hopes of throwing oil upon the flame, and encouraging him still further to the work of composition.

CHAPTER VII.

LIFE IN STUTTGART.

KING FRIEDRICH took great delight in his theatre. He had an especial fondness for gorgeousness of representation; and he had even dazzled Napoleon himself by a splendid performance of "Don Juan." The royal establishment was very richly endowed; and considerable care and expense were bestowed upon the ballet, in which the pristine spirit of the celebrated Noverre still lived. The Royal Academy, founded by Duke Carl, was carried on with satisfactory results, and continued to produce a series of musicians, comedians, singers, and dancers; and thus, in 1808, Stuttgart may be said to have possessed an admirable theatre. In the choice of actors as well as actresses, it is true, too much consideration was given to personal beauty; but the general effect upon the stage, as far as regarded the mere delectation of the eyes, was doubtless considerably enhanced thereby. Operatic and dramatic performances took place alternately four times in the week in Stuttgart, and once at Ludwigsburg, when the court resided at the latter place.

The court was very seldom absent upon these occasions; but all the more favour was shown by royalty to the stage, all the more indifference to it the public seemed resolved to exhibit. The general direction of the establishment was in the hands of the well-intentioned minister, Count Winzingerode; whilst the immediate manager was Chamberlain von Röder; and the conductorship of the orchestra was confided to Carl Maria's friend, Danzi. Introduced by the latter upon the stage, Weber became a more and more frequent visitor behind the scenes, gradually made acquaintance with the various members of the company, and began to associate intimately with them in private life. Thus it came that, in his desire to secure a successful, rather than a perfect, representation of his new opera, the young composer began to consider more and more the personal specialities of the troop and their desires to produce individual effect, rather than the promptings of his own genius. When "Sylvana" was finished, its original design was gone; and it had assumed a wholly different physiognomy, more in conformity perhaps with the particular fancies of the singers, but decidedly not to its own advantage. Now it was the imperishable old tenor Krebs—an excellent musician by the way—who had his "finger in the pie;" now the sweet-voiced second tenor Deckers; now Fischer the bass, whose talent required a good acting part; now the lively buffo-basso Weberling, whose original drollery was to have full scope; now Madame Graff, the "cantatrice à roulades," whose speciality was to be shown off to advantage; now

again, pretty Madame Gollin, who had an extraordinary talent for pantomime action; and now, more especially, that charming, winning, coquettish little serpent, Margarethe Lang, who was to be the mocking, fluttering will-o'-the-wisp to dazzle the foolish boy during his Stuttgart life.

A pretty hodge-podge had librettist, composer, and artists cooked up between them! The opera commences with one of those huntsmen's choruses, in which Weber took delight. Count Rudolph von Helfenstein is bear-hunting with his squire Krips, who has a comic air in the introduction. This low-comedy part had of course to be written up for the favourite buffo, Weberling; and it must be confessed that the musical drollery of this character is by far the best creation of the whole opera, greatly surpassing in geniality and humorous invention all the musical brightness of Aennchen in "Der Freischütz," Scherasmin in "Oberon," or even "Abu Hassan" himself. The romantic young count—to be represented of course by the everlasting old tenor Krebs—expresses his feelings in a long sentimental air. It would be evidently a mistake to give much credit to his passion for bear-hunting. In truth, he has seen in the forest, and been desperately smitten with, a beautiful wild-girl, who cannot speak, and is in consequence very naturally supposed to be dumb. The inflammable young gentleman is not very easy in his mind about this sudden attachment, however, as he happens to be betrothed to the daughter of a Count Adelhardt, who is not a man to be trifled with in these matters; more-

over he does not care for the young lady one straw, whereas the wild-girl plays havoc with his heart. What is he to do in this dilemma? He dissembles, and sings a pretty little drinking-song to his huntsmen to relieve his mind. But the wild-girl comes bounding across his path. It is too much for him. He carries her off to end his doubts—and the act. It is scarcely necessary to add that the part of Sylvana, the dumb-girl, who afterwards is not dumb, had to be worked up to meet the special requirements of Madame Gollin, the lady who did pantomime parts so beautifully.

Now if Rudolph is not very lovingly disposed towards his destined bride, the young lady herself is not a whit behindhand with him. At the very commencement of the second act, Mademoiselle Mechthilde informs her gruff papa, Count Adelhardt, in a poor noisy duet with him, that she has no liking for her intended husband, although the parent's "flinty heart" insists upon her marrying him without delay. The fact is, that the perverse young lady, as she takes care to inform her audience, as soon as she has got rid of papa, in some recitative, followed by a brilliant air, has chosen to fall in love with one Albert von Kleeberg, who, as is naturally the case—in opera-books—is the son of her father's bitterest enemy. It cannot be said that Count Adelhardt, obstinate as he may be, is altogether in the wrong. Kleeberg senior, Albert's progenitor, had stormed his castle, it would appear, many years before, in revenge for being worsted in a love-affair, and carried off, and, it is generally sup-

posed, murdered another daughter, then a baby in the cradle. At this little bit of explanation the audience begin to "smell a rat;" and the interest becomes more palpitating. Now, in the character of Mechthilde, the composer had to deal with more than one perversity; for it was the lively, coquettish, animated Margarethe Lang, who insisted on playing this serious romantic part, which was entirely out of her "line of business," and on being provided with the most sentimental and pathetic music.

In the midst of the general cross-purposes Albert —the second tenor of course—contrives to sneak into the castle with his friend Kurt, and to meet perverse Mademoiselle Mechthilde, who in turn is so fortunate as to have her attendant Clara with her. The situation is consequently highly favourable for a very charming love-quartet between these personages. Sylvana, meanwhile, has been very imprudently brought by the enamoured, but evidently bewildered Rudolph, into the very last place where she ought to be—the castle of her rival's father. This little error in judgment, however, affords an excellent opportunity for a charming display of pantomimic delineation from the wild-damsel, who is astounded at the wonders around her, and, seeing a looking-glass for the first time, dances before it in delight. It has thereby also afforded the composer an occasion for some of the most graceful and captivating music of the whole production.

As nobody chooses to speak out, the festivities previous to the marriage-ceremony go on. It is cer-

tainly very well that they do, for without them the opera would be deprived of its brightest pearl,—a wonderfully-characteristic and animated drinking-song, sung by Krips, a great master-piece of its kind, in which the very smack of the lips and luxurious suction of the drinker are heard, without any detriment to the artistic beauty and grace of the music. Besides, composer, scenic artist, and "property-man" have all opportunities for any amount of display in a great tournament, given on the occasion of the nuptials, at which Albert von Kleeberg, as the inevitable unknown knight, carries off all the prizes, is discovered, nearly loses his life at the hands of blustering old Count Adelhardt, and is fortunately only ignominiously kicked out of the castle—a mitigation of penalties, of which he ungenerously complains in a great air, accompanied by a chorus of his vassals, in the midst of a most uncomfortable and wholly unnecessary thunder-storm.

Count Adelhardt, meanwhile, has made the awkward discovery that a pretty girl is concealed in the apartment of his daughter's intended. To cut the gordian-knot of this compromising affair he can think of nothing handier than killing the young person out of hand. He is about to undertake this little business with his own dagger, when one of those unaccountable feelings so common in melodramas first arrests him in his purpose. Rudolph and Mechthilde then come to sue for mercy; and finally Master Albert is led in captured, bringing with him very opportunely in his train an old hermit named Ullrich, who

declares that Sylvana is the count's own daughter, confided to him by the hostile ravisher, and brought up by him under the express but somewhat incomprehensible condition that she should never learn the use of her tongue. From this time, however, the ill-used young female having discovered that she has such an organ, forthwith takes care to make use of it. The two pairs of lovers are then and there made happy; and the wearying long scene of explanation is fortunately relieved by a torch-dance and chorus, in which all the magic of the young composer's genius is displayed in that wonderful flow of melody and charm of instrumental treatment, which gave such unwonted fire and brilliancy to his later works.

In the very inequalities of its style the opera of "Sylvana" possesses a very considerable degree of interest. A very distinct and rapid progress in the young composer's art is observable throughout the gradual composition of the work. It culminates in the last and best-written pieces,—the drinking-song of Krips, the final chorus, the torch-dance, and, above all, the exquisite overture, which already exhibits all his characteristic melodiousness of ideas; although in the form of its harmonies and its instrumentation it may still incline to the taste of the older masters, and reveal more especially the enduring influence of Vogler.

To the same period of Weber's artistic development belongs another work, the composition of which is contemporaneous with his commencement of "Sylvana." The subject was supplied by a poetical fan-

tasy from the pen of Rochlitz. This poem, which was descriptive of the birth of expression by musical sound in the world, and which was in many respects highly adapted to musical treatment, was used by Weber for a species of cantata, at that time almost unknown, called "Der Erste Ton." In some parts the words of the poem were to be declaimed to accompanying melo-dramatic music; in others to be sung; in others, again, musical descriptions of the growth of tones were made to figure forth in the orchestra. The whole composition is a most successful one, as well in the colour given to the varying feelings and situations, as in the musical pictures, which never degenerate into childish imitations of the well-known sounds of nature. The modulations are admirable: the musical transitions, even when startling, are artfully combined to heighten the effect; and a character of dignity and nobleness pervades the whole. The final strophe, where the world exults in the creation of musical sound, composed for full chorus, is sublime in its effect. This small but admirable work, which was produced at various periods of Weber's career, in all the great cities of Germany, generally with the greatest applause, and which contributed more than any other composition to the establishment of his fame as an artist, has now, strange to say, vanished wholly from the repertory of the musical world.

At the time when Danzi took Carl Maria by the hand, to draw him more closely to the stage, the youth had already begun to feel the sickness of sur-

feit in his wild career; and although the theatre, during the period of the poisoning miasma of King Friedrich's court, cannot be said to have been otherwise than tainted, like the whole whirling mass of Stuttgart society, by the hideous corruption of the times; yet he might have found in its artistic influences a standing-ground, on which his love of art might have taken healthy root. Unfortunately, the inflammable Carl Maria conceived an ardent affection for the singer Margarethe Lang, or "Gretchen" Lang, as she always signed herself. To stem such a passion, or even to have given it a legal form, would have been merely ridiculous and absurd in the eyes of the demoralised circle by which he was surrounded. Gretchen possessed a little plump seductive form, was about twenty years of age, and, in addition to her undoubted musical talent, was endowed with a fund of gay sprightly humour, wholly in sympathy with the youth's own joyous nature. She became the central point of all his life and aspirations. There is no evidence extant to show to what degree of intimacy this union of the two young fiery artist-natures was carried. It is certain, however, that from the time Carl Maria made Gretchen Lang's acquaintance, he seldom quitted her side. The family circles, where he had been so pleasantly received, were now wholly neglected; the jovial crew of "Faust's Ride to Hell" clinked glasses with him seldom; his scanty service even, as private secretary of Duke Ludwig, and musical instructor of his children, was reduced to such grudging limits, that he not only drew down

upon himself the displeasure of the prince, but even excited the attention and remark of his enemy, the King. Nor did he even profit in his circumstances by his separation from his crew of roystering friends. Gretchen Lang's seductions dragged him into a maelstrom of expense no less dangerous than the other. Among his new theatrical friends money flew from his hand like chaff before the wind. Country excursions were constantly being made in grand style, and regardless of all cost; and on such occasions as the birthdays of any of the principal members of the theatrical party, festivities were organised in the same reckless manner.

These festive entertainments frequently consisted of burlesque dramatic representations, generally of a witty and humorous nature, for which Hiemer wrote the words, and Carl Maria composed the incidental music. One of the smartest effects of these little facetiæ was produced by a travestie invented by Weber, and since so frequently misused, wherein the men played the women's characters, and the women the men's. That persons of a more serious turn of mind, such as Lehr and Danzi, also took part in these grotesque representations, is shown by an extant letter, full of quaint humour, from Gretchen Lang to Weber, summoning him to a rehearsal of a new extravaganza called "Mark Antony," which was to be given in honour of the fête of the tenor Krebs. The "cast" of this piece of absurdity included Carl Maria as Cleopatra, Hiemer as Octavia, Danzi as Cleopatra's nurse, Lehr as the Asp, Madame Miedke

the singer as Octavius, and smart little Mademoiselle Gretchen herself as Antony.

The various circumstances of the private life of the individual representatives in these extravagant productions naturally afforded a rich harvest of jocose allusions; for which ample occasion was given by the love-affairs of the ladies, and the mad pranks or impecuniosity of the gentlemen. One of these satirical subjects, in which the heavy debts of some of the young spendthrifts were made the matter of many a jest, and which was written in loose verse and still looser strain by Hiemer, afterwards furnished the groundwork for Weber's charming little opera of "Abu Hassan." Carl Maria himself used to acknowledge, with a laugh, how just were the hard hits dealt at him in this little burlesque drama. The state of his finances, indeed, became more desperate from day to day; and his light-heartedness under the burden can only be accounted for by his constant intercourse with people to whom running into debt was as necessary a portion of their daily life as eating, drinking, or sleeping. As the only one among his new associates of the theatre who held the high position in society accorded to a private secretary of the brother of the sovereign, he very naturally fell into one of those abnormal conditions which marked his life in Stuttgart,—the tendency to play the fine gentleman. This misplaced ambition led him to extravagances dangerous in themselves to his weakly physical constitution. He held himself riding-horses

and a groom, in order to accompany the carriage of the ladies on their numerous picnic parties, as an accomplished cavalier. Great as was his horror of accounts, he was always expected, as the most prominent of the company in position, spirit, and activity, to look after the settlement of expenses in all these parties of pleasure; and as a remembrance of such obligations was not one of the characteristics of his careless associates, his losses were considerable. He soon became enveloped in a net of liabilities, from which he found it impossible to release himself. It was hopeless for him to look for help from his patrons. The Duke Ludwig was comparatively in a still worse state of pecuniary embarrassment than himself. The King had a horror of his brother's private secretary. His very position at court was of a nature to call for sacrifices, which in themselves far exceeded his fixed salary. The constant changes of the court from Stuttgart to Ludwigsburg, from Ludwigsburg to Stuttgart, were an unceasing drain upon his purse, for which he never received compensation. The journeys hither and thither continually undertaken by the Duke and Duchess, in which he was always expected to accompany them, caused heavy disbursements, the promised repayment of which was invariably forgotten or withheld. The receipts from the sale of his compositions were but mere drops of water upon burning sand; and the hope of a rich remuneration from his "Sylvana," the production of which, under the circumstances, was far from likely

to be speedy, was the only bright spot in the vista to throw any light upon the dark chaos of debt and distress around him.

The financial embarrassment of Carl Maria's affairs received a heavy blow,—a *coup-de-grace*, it may be called,—by the wholly unexpected arrival of his father in Stuttgart in the month of April 1809. Without a word of notice, Franz Anton had left Carlsruhe, where he had been comfortably provided for, had packed himself into a diligence with his bass viol and two enormous basket-beds for his two dearly beloved poodles, and had fallen, like a chimney-pot in a storm, on his son's head. Beyond these precious objects and the poodle-dogs themselves, he brought nothing to his bewildered son but a load of debts, among which were several debts of honour. Fresh anxieties thus came upon Carl Maria. The old man had suffered from a bad nervous fever the previous winter. In personal appearance and in bombastic off-hand manner there was no great change in him. But little by little the afflicted son discovered, to his bitter cost, what ravages had been made by disease in the powers of memory, judgment, and observation in the wretched old man, who had been once so richly endowed by nature. Franz Anton installed himself, as a matter of course, in his son's small apartment, hung up the basket-beds of his canine favourites in the one bed-room, which he and his poodles were now to share, and made himself at home. Poor Carl Maria was driven to the verge of despair. Not only were his own fine feelings and his delicate nervous

susceptibilities to disagreeable sounds and bad smells outraged every moment by those detestable spoiled brutes of dogs, but he gradually found how detrimental were the manners and behaviour of the cranky and arrogant old gentleman to all his relations in life. All social intercourse in his own apartment soon became impossible: the little concert-parties of Prince Adam were obliged to be relinquished: pleasant evenings with joyous friends were known no more in his room.

But the annoyances occasioned to Carl Maria by the injury to his standing in Stuttgart, continually inflicted by the misbehaviours of the tiresome old gentleman, were far from being the worst; much more distressing and prejudicial were the consequences of the foolish father's perpetual interference in all the doings and dealings of his son, whom he persisted in fancying as much a boy as when he was Michel Haydn's scholar. With some such a bewildered notion as this, Franz Anton sent off Carl Maria's lately-composed cantata "The First Tone," without the young composer's knowledge, to Rochlitz, the author of the words, who then possessed a great reputation as critic in Leipsic, with a letter containing the drollest mixture of arrogance, affected humility, bombast, and flattery, and signed "Baron von Weber, chamberlain to His Imperial Majesty." It was a letter which would have driven the poor son half mad with indignation, had it not wrung his heart to see such bitter evidence of the utter intellectual decay of the writer. He was almost blessed in his

ignorance of what was passing. When Rochlitz was kind enough to answer this absurd effusion, another letter, almost still more fulsome than the former, was dispatched to entreat the author's kind assistance for the production of the cantata, by the demented old gentleman, who still persisted in signing his imaginary title of chamberlain, with the same mixture of fatuity and vanity which had induced his adoption of that of major.

Undeniable as was the daily increasing disorder of Carl Maria's finances, it was still more evident that the fortunes of his patron Prince Ludwig were sinking with tenfold celerity into an abyss of utter ruin. The duke's income, large as it was, did not suffice to meet one half of his lavish expenditure. In vain he demeaned himself to crouch before the miserable favourite Dillen, in order to secure his interest with the King. Friedrich, who had with difficulty been induced to pay a debt still heavier than ever for his brother, after an unusually wild explosion of rage, had sworn, with the bitterest curses, that the prince and all who trusted him might go to—any where; that he would pack off the incorrigible spendthrift to a small garrison town; but that he would never pay another florin! And King Friedrich was a man to keep his word. But neither the threats of the King, the bitter tears and entreaties of the Duchess, or the lamentations of his weary creditors, could induce the reckless Prince to change his mode of life. Purveyors and servants remained unpaid. They murmured loudly, and threatened to lay their complaints

before the King. But the Duke well knew how shy they would be of taking such a step before a judge whose habit it was to visit the plaintiff with as much wrath as the defendant. It was soon rumoured, however, how deeply the Prince had fallen under his brother's displeasure; loans became more and more difficult, nay impossible; it was evident that matters could not remain thus.

Under these circumstances, Carl Maria's tact, zeal, and charm of manner rendered incalculable service to the Prince. He hunted out fresh capitalists, and by his gay, witty, half-bantering representations, almost persuaded them that lending was one of the delights of life, and the not being paid the greatest of honours. No one could be more seductive with that winning tongue; but no one, it must be said for him, in his ardent flow of language, could have meant more honourably, or have been more sincere in promises. He himself addressed to the Duke the most touching letters of entreaty and sage advice, calling upon him to control his expenses, put his household in order, organise a sinking fund, and live in a manner worthy of his rank and family. It seems almost ridiculous to see this youth, himself so deeply involved in embarrassments, preaching prudence and economy to his more than middle-aged patron; like a child dressed in his grandfather's clothes, exhorting his naughty elder brother: but the letters were no less composed in a true, sensible, and practical spirit; and they flowed as evidently from the depths of his own warm heart. Neither Carl Maria's active as-

sistance nor respectful expostulations, however, could check the precipitous course of the Duke upon his road to ruin. The means to which he had recourse to obtain money became more and more desperate. Public opinion, although it seldom dared to raise its voice in Würtemberg, soon began to accuse the Duke of a great and crying abuse of his privileges as a prince of the royal house. It was in this wise.

The battles of Wagram, Linz, and Eckmühl had decimated the Würtemberg army. But all the more determined was King Friedrich to carry out, to their most frightful extent, the existing laws regarding the conscription, and the obligations of military service. From these laws, as has been before remarked, no persons, whatever their rank, were exempt, unless in some degree attached to the service of the King, or that of a member of the royal family. It naturally followed, therefore, that such a choice article as a post in a royal household was in great request for the sons of noble and wealthy families; and the more fearful the requirements of the war, the greater were the sacrifices people were disposed to make, in order to secure so coveted a safety-plank from the general shipwreck. Where men were ready enough to pay largely for such an advantage, it may naturally be supposed, in the utterly corrupt state of society in Würtemberg at the time, that men were only too ready to clutch the offered gold as pilots to such a haven on the stormy sea of court-life. False steersmen also were not unfrequently to be found, who sold their services, under the pretence of obtaining a court appointment for

young men of mark, at an enormous price, and then laughed at their willing dupes. It was of this detestable traffic that Prince Ludwig was openly accused. The public could not but see that the ducal household was augmented, in the most surprising manner, by a herd of young noblemen, who accepted the very lowest positions in service, without performing any function in reality. Whether the accusation were true or false,—a matter which there is no extant evidence to determine,—the mere suspicion was prejudicial in every respect, not only to the Duke, but to all those about his person. The King too, from whom all these manœuvres were, as far as possible, kept dark, began to view with mistrust this constant withdrawal of so many of the sons of his nobility—which, by the way, he hated bitterly—from military service. He took a stern resolution to let any one, whom he might catch tripping *in flagrante delicto*, feel the whole weight of his wrathful royal hand. The unhappy wight on whom the royal thunderbolt was first to fall was poor Carl Maria.

There can be no doubt that the young man must have had cognisance of the vile system of barter and sale practised as "a new way to pay old debts." But the very state of his disordered finances is a proof that he never could himself have used the golden bucket at this full fountain of bribery, as would have been easy for him to do in his position. It is evident, however, that his delicate apprehension of right and wrong must have been completely blunted by perpetual contact with the general depravity

which had, as always, been generated from tyranny and oppression, as the plague from rottenness and corruption. Otherwise, would he have received, acknowledged, administered sums of money, the questionable origin of which he must have known, without immediately quitting a service at once so compromising and degrading?

It was impossible, however, thus to play with fire without a burn. A fearful explosion came. It was about the end of the year 1809 when Carl Maria discovered, to his terror and dismay, that his father had misappropriated certain sums, which, as secretary, he had received from the Duke for the payment of some obligations on the family estates in Silesia. The old gentleman, now weak in intellect, without any idea of the terrible responsibility entailed upon his son, and, it may be hoped, in utter forgetfulness of the destination of the money, had sent the whole sum off to Carlsruhe, for the payment of the heaviest of the debts which he had there left behind him. In this distressing dilemma, Carl Maria besought the landlord of the inn at Schwieberdingen, at whose house many a jovial party had taken place, one Höner, to lend him the sum of 1000 florins, in order to cover this cruel deficit; he was refused. The Duke had speedily discovered that the money intrusted to his young secretary had never reached its destination. Carl Maria at once confessed with openness the whole state of affairs to his patron, and promised that speedy reparation should be made.

At this critical juncture, a certain Huber, a fellow who had been formerly in Carl Maria's immediate service as groom, and had since become a court-lackey in the duke's household, came to the distracted youth, and offered to procure him from Höner the loan of the 1000 florins, before declined, upon the understanding that he himself should receive a small "consideration." Carl Maria accepted with delight, received the required sum, signed an acknowledgement to Höner, and recompensed the intermediary with a few louis d'or, without ever asking by what magic the money had been obtained. The deficit in the accounts with the Duke was duly repaid; and the affair was supposed to have an end.

Not so. Master Huber was a thorough rascal, who, for the aforesaid small "consideration," had deluded the inn-keeper out of his money, under the representation that, in return for the loan, the influential young secretary Weber would undertake to obtain a nominal post at court for his son, and thus free the boy from the terrors of the conscription. But when months went by, the bill had long since become due, no post had been bestowed upon his son, and the boy in January 1810 had been drafted into the army, Höner became awfully indignant, and openly denounced the whole affair. The matter came before the King, who now had an opportunity, not only of making an example of one of these traffickers in appointments, who robbed him of so many sturdy soldiers, but of trouncing severely that "forward young puppy of a secretary," who was so ut-

terly obnoxious to him. The alleged culprit, meanwhile, was ignorant of all.

A few weeks before this discovery, "Sylvana" had been finished. Danzi had obtained the permission of Count Winzingerode, the director, to prepare the young composer's opera for immediate representation; and Carl Maria was daily, for many hours at a time, in the theatre making arrangements for the long-desired performance and the impending rehearsals. He was thus employed on the evening of the 9th of February 1810, when suddenly the orchestra was invaded by a body of gendarmes, who arrested the terrified Weber in the name of the King, and without even leaving him time to say a few last words to Danzi, dragged him off to prison. His father, he learned, was under arrest in his own apartment.

Then followed sixteen days and nights of the bitterest sorrow the young man had ever known. He had many follies to repent, and could not complain that the dangerous roses he had gathered had brought with them their due crop of thorns. But his worst affliction came in his cruel experiences of the ways of the world. His boon companions and his jovial friends fell back from him. His patron, whom he might have betrayed by his disclosures, and whom he stood by devotedly, with a self-sacrifice which cannot but throw a lustre upon his character, even at this painful period, from the moment of his arrest, deserted him. Danzi alone was "true as steel." Without being swayed by any coward fears of compromis-

ing himself or his position, he openly proclaimed Carl Maria's innocence, petitioned and entreated, and even undauntedly demanded a personal interview, for explanation rather than intercession, with the dreaded monarch. Bitter indeed was the experience of those sixteen days, spent within a prison's walls—bitter and yet healing. Those sixteen days were a dark cleft in Weber's life, sundering the weak reckless youth, half artist, half fine gentleman, trifling with his own genius, and ever ready to turn aside out of its true path, from the mature and resolute man, conscious of his own weaknesses, yet determined in his line of duty, earnest, orderly, true to himself and to his destiny—the noble, admirable, gifted man, whose character is "for all time."

The examination of the alleged culprit took place, it would appear, in the cabinet of the King, who thundered out his foulest rage on Carl Maria, and tried in every way to intimidate him. The time was come when majesty might be avenged. Every advantage was taken against Carl Maria, with the evident purpose of crushing the young man for ever. His apartment had been ransacked. Two silver candlesticks, a present from Prince Adam, and even the money received from the sale of his compositions, were brought against him as evidence of theft. But the youth was undaunted. He solemnly swore that he was wholly ignorant of the device by which the money was raised from Höner; and parried with tact all the insidious interrogating, as to his knowledge of appointments sold for the evasion of military con-

scription, so as not to compromise his ungrateful patron the Duke. Even Franz Anton, who, in his turn, was severely examined and threatened, exhibited more firmness and good sense than could have been well expected of the weak-minded old man. He resolutely asserted the truth and innocence of his son, who, he said, was incapable of any falsehood or dishonourable action; whilst he himself was only "a poor, foolish man, whose memory was gone." The King was sharp enough in judgment not to see what was the real truth in the matter: for many reasons, too, he was anxious to stifle the affair. But he was not to be cheated wholly of his opportunity of revenge. Carl Maria was transferred from the criminal prison to the prison for debt. Numerous creditors now, of course, came forward to press for his detention. But it soon became clear that this step was not agreeable to the highest authorities; and it was resolved by the claimants that it would be better to come to a private arrangement. Carl Maria was released.

But Friedrich had now gained his ends. Without any consideration for the just claims of his own subjects, under these circumstances, he gave orders that the Webers, father and son, should be immediately transported over the boundaries. On the morning of the 26th February 1810, they were suddenly aroused by a commissary of police, ordered to pack up their things, put into a carriage, which was to convey them to the nearest frontier point, and thus dispatched out of the country, without being allowed

one word, one line of communication with a single friend. In Stuttgart the rumour ran that day, that they had been taken to the fortress of Hohenasberg; and many a sigh of commiseration was breathed for the amiable young artist, of whose innocence and honour no one for a moment doubted, and who was generally looked upon as the unlucky scapegoat of a personage whose position raised him above punishment.

On starting for exile the fortunes of the Webers were reduced to the pitiful sum of forty florins. But Götz, the police officer who accompanied them, was a singular specimen of his race. He, with all the other inhabitants of Stuttgart, was convinced of the youth's innocence. He pressed the sum of twenty-five florins more into Carl Maria's hand, and gave him, by stealth, several letters of introduction for Manheim, which the good Danzi had confided to his care; the good Danzi, who in his bitterness of affliction, wrote, a few weeks afterwards, to Carl Maria, saying that rather than keep foot upon the hated soil of Würtemberg, he desired to give up his post.

In Fürfeld, the frontier town, the Webers, father and son, were officially informed that they were banished from Würtemberg for life, and could never again enter that country.

Sad was this last scene of Weber's youthful follies! So sad, that during his whole life he sought, as far as possible, to efface from his mind all recollection of those days. With his friends in after years, even with his wife, he sought to preserve a complete

silence upon this miserable time. Even his letters of that period he endeavoured to recall and destroy, that none might know its utter wretchedness.

It may be here stated, that Duke Ludwig, very shortly after this affair, was so utterly repudiated by his brother, that he went off to Russia, and for many years never visited the country. He returned only to live in strict retirement.

CHAPTER VIII.

MANHEIM AND HEIDELBERG IN 1810.

THE unhappy wandering couple turned their steps to Manheim. Both were attracted to that town, although by different motives. Franz Anton hoped to revive the long-slumbering connexions of his own young days; he was speedily to find that death, or the shifting changes of life, had robbed him of them all. Carl Maria had good Danzi's letters of introduction thither; he had resolved, at any and every sacrifice, once more to devote himself to his art alone; and he knew that on Manheim still shone the reflected rays of those musical and theatrical glories, which Carl Theodor's love of art and fine taste had once shed around it.

Before the year 1778, when the court of Carl Theodor had been transferred to Munich, the theatre of Manheim had very justly obtained, under the happy auspices of the accomplished Elector, and with the assistance of Holzbauer and Vogler, the high reputation of being the best opera in Germany. But this celebrated establishment had been broken up. A

portion of the company had followed the prince; the remainder had been dispersed to all four quarters of Germany. Then came the cannon of Clairfait to batter the splendid opera-house to the ground. But the feeling for all that is good and true in art still remained alive in the heart of that pleasant little town, and conjured up a sort of Indian summer of art, which still produced blossom and fruit, and was all the more prized by the Manheimers, because they felt that they owed to themselves alone this excellent after-crop of artistic produce. A handsome national theatre had been rebuilt, supported by a yearly subsidy of 20,000 florins from the Elector, with the violoncello player Peter Ritter, the composer of "Maria von Montalban" and other operas, as conductor of the orchestra.

But the Manheimers had been too long schooled in artistic taste to content themselves with professional excellence alone. They had established a society for amateur concerts, which, by its great exertions, unrelaxing zeal, and artistic perfection, had raised itself wholly out of the rank of ordinary amateur repute. This society, which in the year 1809 had taken the name of "The Museum," and was in possession of a very handsome hall, close by the theatre, had become the great central point, not only of all musically social life, but of all social life in Manheim. Contrary to the original statutes of the society, and not without considerable opposition on the part of many of its members, a small portion of its band had been recruited, chiefly on account of a

weakness in the bass instruments, from the ranks of the professionals in the orchestra of the theatre. But the well-established reputation of the amateur concerts cannot be said to have been any way injured thereby. All were, in truth, artists alike.

At the head of the society stood Gottfried Weber, the chief of the revenue department in Manheim; an amiable and pleasing man, about thirty-one years of age in 1810. Gottfried Weber, with his fundamental musical knowledge, his active spirit, and truly eminent talent for conducting both orchestra and chorus, was just the man to inspire a musical society with all the fire that glowed in his own heart. He was possessed of wonderful energy of manner as well as of purpose; felt that the path of art on which he was destined to move was one rather of sound theoretical judgment than of practical direction, and devoted himself to the severest study of the requirements of his post with unflagging industry and an iron will. By the soundness of his theories, as well as by his profound knowledge, he exercised a great authority over all musicians. Fortunately for him the official world around him had the good sense, unlike modern pragmatical pedants in office, to see that the pursuit of an ennobling art was not necessarily prejudicial to the due fulfilment of stringent public service; and he might have looked upon it as an especial mercy, that he was spared a perpetual struggle against obstinacy and stupidity in bureaucratic form. His wife, a charming and beautiful woman, who was the pride and honour of his life, possessed

a bewitching soprano voice, and a thoroughly solid Italian method, which rendered her the brightest gem in the crown of the society. By a rare chance, one of her friends, a Fräulein Theresa Grua, was gifted with a contralto voice of almost equal charm, and as admirably trained. The tenor voice was supplied by Walter, then engaged at the theatre. Crowds flocked so eagerly for admission to the ranks of the choruses, that it was necessary to exercise the severest judgment and considerable tact in the selection. The "Museum," in 1810, was thus in a condition, under the guidance of Gottfried Weber's firm baton, to give vocal and instrumental performances which might well rival with the best.

Such was the artistic world into which Carl Maria entered, when, as a poor exile and banished criminal, he arrived at Manheim on the 27th February 1810. From Danzi, who not only had exercised so powerful an influence upon his artistic development, but seemed now to hold all the threads of the young composer's destiny in his hand, he had letters of recommendation—those precious letters rescued from the prying eye of tyranny—for Gottfried Weber, Capell-meister Ritter, and other estimable personages of the town. By all Carl Maria was received with kindness. But for none of those, who now stretched forth the hand to him, did he conceive that immediate sympathy which he at once experienced for Gottfried Weber. This sympathy was responded to with all the force of Gottfried's energetic nature. An enduring and practical friendship between the

two men sprang up to maturity in about as many days as it generally takes years to rear so marvellous a plant. This reciprocal affection in men, whose ages differed considerably, may have been favoured by the fact that Carl Maria's exuberant youthful spirits had been considerably tamed down by the sad events of the more immediate past, and that his manners had assumed the appearance of more mature and earnest manhood. The time was come when, for his own good as for that of art, his own awakened energies, and the attachment of worthy friends, were to rescue him from that abnormal and diseased state of mind into which a demoralised condition of society, and his own folly, had plunged him.

Carl Maria's first care was to see his old father, whose infirmities were increasing more and more, and whose fits of intellectual weakness became more and more frequent, well and comfortably bestowed. An asylum was found for him in the house of Gottfried Weber's father, who, with the readiest kindness, offered to take care of the poor old man during the absences of Carl Maria. His mind once relieved from this burden, the young composer pushed his journey on to Heidelberg, in order to visit his old friend Voss, who had received the title of Baden Court Counsellor, and resided there in retirement; as also to present a letter from Danzi to musical director Hoffman, through whose intermediation he trusted to be able to give a concert. This concert Carl Maria looked upon as a door open for the return of the prodigal son to his home of art; and it was not

without feelings of awe that he took the steps which might lead him to so desirable a result.

The first of these steps, taken immediately on his arrival at picturesque old Heidelberg, led him at once to the room of a fine young fellow just completing his university education as a student. This was Alexander von Dusch, the brother of Gottfried Weber's lovely wife. He was an enthusiastic melomaniac, and beloved by all that knew him. Gottfried Weber had urged upon his young friend an acquaintance with his amiable brother-in-law. The recommendation was little needed: scarcely had the two young men seen each other—scarcely had Dusch conversed with the young stranger half-an-hour, and heard him play ten minutes, when the two were sworn friends for life. Through life that friendship was to be for both a treasure. It seemed as though destiny had resolved to compensate poor Carl Maria, immediately after those miserable days of his existence, when his bitter experience of the world might have crushed all affections in his heart, by showering into his lap the choicest gems of friendship and heart's kindliness. Friends were now fated to come around him, whose attachment was to prove a golden thread of Ariadne, to show him the true path through all the dark labyrinth of life, and form a warm and sunny background to the picture of the future, in which fame and homage were to be the prominent and noble figures.

Dusch, full of pride in his newly acquired friend, carried off Weber with a sort of triumph, into the

midst of all the little musical world of Heidelberg—that charming Heidelberg, which pours forth such rich treasures of loveliness from its golden forest-circled goblet of the valley of the Neckar. Musical director Hoffman, stimulated as much by the enthusiastic introduction of young Dusch, as by Danzi's letter, frankly and freely offered the youth his aid to forward the important project of the concert. All the influential amateur musicians of the town, stirred up by Dusch's zeal, consented to favour the attempt in every way. Old Gries, the translator of Ariosto and Tasso, who had the direction of all the town concerts, and who, in spite of his deafness, was a devoted worshipper of music, held out his influential hand to the young man; and even that uncompromising musical rigorist, the celebrated jurist, Justus Thibaut, was greatly interested in the youthful genius, and at first welcomed him warmly to his house; although he afterwards, in consequence of his peculiar musical notions, became Weber's determined opponent. All, then, seemed to go well for Carl Maria's hopes.

Other friends, too, less influential in a musical point of view, welcomed the young composer kindly. The heart of old Heinrich Voss warmed at once to the young man, whom, shortly before his departure from Cutin, he had known only as a clever promising boy. The rigorous patriarchal rules of the old poet's household, however, were too fettering for the spirits of youth; and, in spite of his great respect for the celebrated classic, Carl Maria was not often in his

society. Far more frequent intercourse was carried on with the Houts—a family then residing at Stift Neuburg, an ancient convent, situated like a little paradise in a most romantic position, on the banks of the Neckar, at a short distance from Heidelberg. For the inhabitants of this sweet spot, Carl Maria had letters of introduction from Danzi; and one of his greatest Heidelberg pleasures was to wander thither with his friend Dusch, who himself loved dearly this "abode created for poetic natures," as he was wont to call Stift Neuburg. The mistress of the house soon became one of the warmest admirers of Carl Maria's genius. No wonder, then, that the "little paradise," with its excellent inmates, should have formed the nucleus of the many attractions that bound the young man's heart in so many bonds of love to Heidelberg.

The town possessed also many men of talent and worth, in whose society young Carl Maria was proud to linger. As may naturally be supposed, his new young student friend Dusch took care to affiliate so genial a fellow with the student band of the university. Carl Maria was not the man to shirk the drinking bouts of such jovial associates, or hold back from the riotous pleasantries of the students' "Commers." The artist, whose destiny it was always to see youth and enthusiasm and the spirit of progress ranged on his side throughout life, naturally won, at the first start, all the hearts of the merry crew. He sang some of his sprightliest songs to them; tickled their fancies with his sparkling guitar; and, on one

of his first evenings, arranged a serenade of students in honour of the most noted belles of the ball-room, which proved a signal success.

With such friends around him, Carl Maria looked forward to a brilliant concert. He had paved the way for this much-desired event, by playing his own variations on the air "Vien qua Dorina bella," at a great amateur concert, and by charming all hearts not only with his brilliant execution on the piano, but with the ineffable grace and feeling of his play. But it had been strange, indeed, if ill-luck should have altogether, and at once, released its hold on the much-tried young composer. It owed him a bad turn in the midst of so much joy. After one of the "Commers" parties of the students, a "row," occasioned by a quarrel, took place in the town, and soon assumed the dimensions of so formidable a riot, that it became necessary to dispatch military troops to Heidelberg to quell the uproar. The greatest sufferer by the affair was poor Carl Maria, whose hopefully anticipated concert, just then on the point of taking place, entirely fell to the ground in the confusion.

Meanwhile, however, through the influence of Gottfried Weber and other friends, the path had been smoothed for him to give a concert at Manheim. So thither he returned: and on the 9th March, Carl Maria was enabled to give his first concert since his return into the bosom of his art; and not only to perform several of his own piano compositions, but to hear his first symphony, written during the happy

days at the little court of Carlsruhe, in Silesia, admirably executed by the amateur band of Manheim.

But the poor fellow's purse, reduced to the miserable pittance of forty florins on his arrival at Manheim, was not much enriched by the result of this first effort. All expenses paid, thirteen florins alone remained. He stuck stanchly by his resolve to run no more into debt; but hunger stared him in the face. In this dilemma his new friends still stood by him. A second concert was arranged; it took place on the second of April, with a crowded hall, and under the happiest auspices. Carl Maria's symphony was repeated "by desire:" he played himself in his own charming quartetts for piano-forte, violin, viola, and violoncello; and—what was far more important for his fame—his cantata, "Der Erste Ton," was first produced in admirable style, and before a competent public. The choice Manheim band of amateurs and artists worked with love and zeal in the orchestra, under Gottfried Weber's spirited conductorship; the choir of voices, in which all the greatest solo singers joined, gave the fullest effect to the choruses. The great tragedian Esslair, whose fame is still cherished and honoured throughout all Germany, declaimed the verses of the poem with masterly effect. The clear tones of his wonderfully beautiful voice united themselves, as if by inspiration, with the music, and swelled with power and majesty over the torrent of sound; and when the storm of his marvellous declamation gave way to the full burst of the final chorus, so animated in rhythm, and so rich in tone, the whole

audience involuntarily burst forth into a tumult of applause. It was a proud moment in the young composer's life. The musician, the lover of art, the critic, were all unanimous in their delight at this remarkable concert. The fame of Weber's genius, it was said, was established, by this one evening, far along the banks of the Rhine, from the Black Forest to the Taunus mountains. Perhaps, however, it was more to the young fellow's purpose, at that moment, that the results of the evening should have added the modest sum of three and fifty florins to his miserable purse.

At Easter 1810, Alexander von Dusch had returned to his family in Manheim upon the termination of his studies at the University; and with the reunion of the two new friends, both so richly endowed with musical genius, both so warm-hearted and enthusiastic in their nature, began that pleasant period at Manheim, in which genius and art went hand in hand with youth, and life, and spirit, and which all, who were happy enough to catch a glimpse of the fairy sheen of that magic circle, then conjured up, looked back upon, in after years, brief as was the time, as a paradise lost. The ruling spirits of that circle, Gottfried Weber, Dusch, and Carl Maria, were wont to lead a happy wandering life between Manheim and Heidelberg with its alluring Stift Neuburg. Often might they be seen, on such occasions, strolling by moonlight along the valley of the Neckar, whilst the sprightly notes of the guitar, and the sound of sweetly murmured songs floated on

the still night-air. Now they were to be found playing Haydn's Trios with earnest zeal, on piano, violin, and violoncello, in the Museum at Manheim; on the morrow "commercing" with the students of Heidelberg with hearts as fresh and full, as when they sang by the river-side, or made music in their hall. Full of the profoundest love of art, and yet of the richest joyousness, was their life at home in Manheim. Often at morning's dawn might they be found together at breakfast in the dwelling of one or other; together again at the dinner-table of the "Three Kings,"—unless, indeed, as was frequently the case, both Dusch and Carl Maria dined with Gottfried Weber; together again in the evening, labouring devotedly at their darling art. To these evening meetings other artistic spirits were admitted; among whom Berger, the comedian and tenor, was one of the most distinguished. In the best family circles the talented trio was in constant requisition; and enchanting were the evenings, when at the house of Count Benzel-Sternau, the President of the Supreme Court of Manheim, and his accomplished wife, all were united with the choicest society of young, gifted, and beautiful female amateurs, around the table or piano; and sunny hearts beat, and bright faces smiled under the enchantment of music's charms. No pedantry ruled here: and often comic canons, composed on the spot by Carl Maria, to fitting words, and studied as they flowed from his pen, raised the mirthful tone of the assembled party to the highest pitch. Often, too, on bright nights, the three sworn friends, after their quiet sup-

per at the "Three Kings," would wander through the hushed streets of Manheim with their guitars; and by their newest songs gently wake the lady-singers from their first slumber, in sounds so soft and sweet, that to this day the looks of the few old ladies, still living, who were then young and lovely devotees to art, will kindle at the thought of the nights, when softly roused from sleep, they lay and listened, with beating hearts, to the bewitching strains. A picture it must have been to any eyes, that might look in upon the three young men, thus firmly bound together in that charming artistic bond, which Gottfried Weber's influence had first woven round them, grouped in Weber's little room—punchbowl on table—instruments scattered on every side—with the big broad-shouldered imposing Gottfried lolling on the sofa—the dark, black-eyed, lithesome, animated Alexander walking in restlessness up and down the narrow space—and the slim sickly-looking Carl Maria sprawling his legs, as was his joy to do in careless moments, on the table.

Carl Maria's person was then, as it always was through life, small, weakly, almost insignificant—not otherwise than well-formed, however, unless exception were to be taken to the long thin neck, which rose so conspicuously from his narrow shoulders. The weakness of his left hip, which later in life gave an appearance of limping to his movements, was not as yet very observable. There was much in him to charm, whether in the noble form of his somewhat lengthy head, or in his deep blue-gray eyes, which his friends have termed "inexhaustible fountains of kindliness

and love,"—or in the ever-varying expression of his face, now lightened by roguish humour or jovial enjoyment, now flushed with enthusiasm, now illumined, as with a halo, by profound and noble thoughts—or in that full barytone voice, which flowed from him so richly in discourse, unless sometimes broken up in strong emotion, and which had not yet assumed that iron tone, which his experience of life taught him to use on necessary occasions—or in the expressive, graceful, but simple gestures of his beautifully formed hands—or in the unmistakeable air of geniality, which pervaded every action, every look. No wonder, then, that many women, and those especially of finer feeling, preferred the youth to handsomer and more striking men. At this period, he already wore the long black coat, the tightly-fitting pantaloons, the white neckcloth, the conspicuous shirtfrill, and the high "cannon" boots, with which his portraiture is now almost inseparable in men's minds.

It would be wrong to suppose that the life of the three artist-friends at Manheim was spent only in mirth, and song, and merry jest. The path of true art was trodden with steady and laborious steps; even while, as a relief, new ideas were every now and then started and improvised upon piano or guitar. The profoundest art-criticism was the staple of most of their conversations. Modern poetry was judged according to its musical aspect and its adaptability for composition. Subjects for criticism were distributed to one or another, according to the individual qualities, or idiosyncrasy of each; and critical articles were writ-

ten by the friends, and published frequently in the literary and musical periodicals of the day. Nor did the frank young fellows spare the severest criticisms on their own respective productions. "You won't take it ill, I know, brother, if I—" was often the prelude of many a rigorous judgment, which made the heart of the judged one quake. But at the same time, no works, that were not freely laid before the judgment-seat, were ever touched upon in any way. Carl Maria, with that mixture of poetry and superstition, which was one of the peculiar characteristics of his nature, had a leaning towards a belief in presentiments, auguries, and good or evil signs; and it was his fancy that no new work which was spoken of before it arrived at completion, would ever attain a happy issue.

The more advantageous to their own career in art, as well as to the interests of art itself, this intellectual coöperation of the three ardent young men appeared to them, the more desirous they became to establish the union on a firm and practical basis. The idea was conceived by them of an "Harmonic Society;" which Weber afterwards carried out with success, and which was destined to play an important part in the doings and workings of them all. Unwittingly, and without any desire of thrusting himself forward, Carl Maria had by degrees assumed a superiority over his compeers, who unconsciously perhaps, but at all events with right good will, bowed their heads to the yoke; and thus, in the establishment of this "Harmonic Society," it was he

who was unconsciously thrust into the first and leading post.

Many exquisite songs were composed by Gottfried Weber, as well as Carl Maria, at this period, which may be looked upon as important embodiments of a new idea in the composition of the German "Lied." Both felt that something, more conformable to sense and reason, might be done with poetic words, than by only clothing them, as heretofore, with one mere melody, which was to be carried through the whole, without regard for the true weight and feeling of the verses; while still, as a primary condition, simplicity of style might be observed. That which Mozart had done in that one beautiful Lied "the Violet"—that which Franz Schubert carried afterwards to its highest pitch of development, but which has since degenerated in Germany into sickly, hysterical, pseudo-psychological experimentalisings, became the end and aim of the "Lied" compositions of the inspired young men. Most of their "Lieder" were composed for the guitar; an instrument so appropriate to these pieces, which misuse and tasteless treatment have alone brought out of fashion. A rich treasury of songs of this description has been left to the world by Carl Maria von Weber: and assuredly one day, when that world has been sufficiently surfeited with its present food for epileptic "soul-sufferers," and can find once more a taste for the solid, genuine, and true in art, will they again emerge into light from the darkness of their temporary oblivion.

In spite of all the manifold charms Manheim pos-

sessed for Carl Maria in the daily intercourse with noble amiable women and distinguished men—in spite of all his ardent desire to prolong an existence so congenial—he could but feel how necessary it was for him, for the sake of his own fame and cultivation as an artist, and even those material profits, of which poor Manheim was but a scanty fountain-head, that he should look around him, and show himself in the world. The prospects of art had begun to revive in Germany; and if the crop of golden laurels, which afterwards lay so thickly for an artist's gathering hand, was not yet fully ripe, yet honour and a fair provision were still to be reaped abroad. An advantageous and convenient central point had to be sought out by Carl Maria, whence he could direct his future journeys in the interest of his art, but where he might still be able to find easy access to his beloved friends, meet them on all the more important occasions of their respective careers in art, celebrate with them their family festivities, and now and then wander with them on happy pilgrimages, or warble serenades to lovely maids and noble dames. Darmstadt was the obvious spot to meet all requirements. At Darmstadt too now resided his former master the Abbé Vogler. In heart, Carl Maria was deeply attached to this strange, erratic, whimsical, yet far and wide renowned professor of the mysteries of musical art. Good friend Gänsbacher too had followed with constancy the wanderings of the seductive man: he too was there. So to Darmstadt Carl Maria was led by affection, as well as convenience and interest.

CHAPTER IX.

DARMSTADT IN 1810.

It was not without the tribute of many tears from many eyes that Carl Maria was allowed to depart from Manheim, amidst promises of a speedy return. Gottfried Weber and Dusch accompanied him on his little journey to Darmstadt. The young composer found himself a modest lodging in the Ochsen-Gasse, as befitted his modest purse, obtained board for his dinner at twelve kreutzer (about fourpence) a day, and, in spite of his straitened circumstances, prepared, with a light and cheery heart, to commence his new life at the neat little capital, then budding into note under the fatherly care of the Grand Duke Ludwig I.

As early as the year 1670, a theatre had been established in Darmstadt in a building which had formerly been a riding-school; and in the year 1710 a magnificent opera-house had been erected on the spot, under Landgrave Ernst Ludwig. Almost all the Landgraves of this period had been great lovers of music, and had gathered the best singers and instrumentalists of the day around them. Amateur concerts even had been instituted under the highest

influences. The reigning Grand Duke, Ludwig I., had been schooled in the science of music by the best teachers of the day. He was able to read the most difficult scores with ease, and was himself an excellent performer on violin, piano, flute, and horn. He had a legitimate pride in his admirable choir; and, not without a certain degree of friendly pressure, he had collected and drilled, by constant earnest practice, an amateur chorus, for his court concerts, composed chiefly of his officers, both civil and military, and their wives and daughters. He had thus formed an unusually admirable vocal band. Immediately after his accession to the throne in 1790, he had taken the whole opera under his own personal direction. He conducted himself four times a week all the opera rehearsals, and tested, engaged, organised, or dismissed all the members of the company, exactly like a professional conductor. A Capell-meister *in partibus* was provided for the performances in Georg Mangold, an admirable violin-player. Operas were given on Sundays in the new court opera-house, and purely dramatic performances on Tuesdays and Fridays.

This enthusiastic lover of art had expressly invited the Abbé Vogler, of whom he was a devoted admirer, to Darmstadt, not so much for the sake of offering the famous musician any especial post, as for the pride of attaching so great a celebrity to his court. Not that he made any especial use of the genius and science of the Abbé, whose advice in musical matters he never sought, and whom he never allowed to interfere in the direction of the opera, except when the

composer's own works were produced. He had bestowed on his musical idol the title of Privy Counsellor, the grand cross of his order, and a very handsome pension to gild the evening of his life. He had, moreover, made the old musician the present of a house, in which he supplied him with daily dinners and suppers from his grand-ducal kitchens, four wax candles a day, and fire-wood *ad libitum*. Vogler, nevertheless, was almost a daily guest at the duke's own table, where the good Burgundy was evidently very much to his taste. In all Darmstadt there was no better known or more striking individual than the Abbé Vogler. His appearance was not prepossessing, however. The old Abbé was short and corpulent: his features were strongly marked, but of no very friendly expression. His peculiarly long arms, and enormous hands, which enabled him to stretch with ease two octaves on the organ, gave him somewhat the aspect of a large fat ape. Vanity was one of his ruling passions; and, vainer now than ever, he delighted to exhibit himself in all his elegance of black satin breeches, red silk stockings, and gold buckles in his shoes, with his great cross of the order of Ludwig on the left breast of his rich broad black coat, and his black silk ecclesiastical mantle jauntily hung over his right shoulder.

The Abbé Vogler received his beloved scholar with open arms. Gänsbacher was overjoyed. In the Abbé's house Carl Maria was destined, moreover, to make acquaintance with another young musical genius, as yet unknown to him. This was Jacob

Mayer Beer (more generally known under the name of Mayerbeer), the son of a rich banker in Berlin. Mayerbeer was then scarcely sixteen years of age; but his eminent musical talents had developed themselves so early, that he already possessed a very considerable reputation as pianist. He was now studying music under the Abbé Vogler, in whose house, for the better furtherance of his labours, he was lodged and boarded. His master was enchanted with his unwearying industry and zeal, his restless activity, and his almost incredible quickness of conception, which, in all the technical portion of the science, seemed to amount to divination. Although but a boy as yet, he possessed such powers of execution on the piano that he might already have earned a handsome independence as a professional performer, had not fortune raised him above any such necessity. He was able to play the most elaborate instrumental scores at sight, with a full mastery of every part, which amounted to the marvellous; and this peculiar talent he was accustomed to exercise upon the principal scores of all the great masters, which he was fortunate enough to possess, bound with care, in his great musical library, to the envy and to the great benefit also of his young fellow-labourers. So untiring was his industry that, for weeks together, he would never leave his room, or put off his dressing-gown, when fascinated by some new branch of musical study. His four-part "Sacred Songs of Klopstock" had already been published, and had entitled him to respect as a composer. Such was the little insignifi-

cant-looking boy-artist Mayerbeer at this period. His amiable and friendly disposition soon attracted him to the young, joyous, animated, high-spirited "sucking" maestro, who had dashed over from Manheim; although his colder and more reserved North-German nature was never able to express that warmer and more demonstrative affection, which had bound Carl Maria's expansive heart to such friends as Gänsbacher, and those from whom he had just parted with so heavy a heart.

The small circle, in the midst of which Carl Maria now found himself, came together either in the Abbé Vogler's house, or in that of Court Counsellor Hoffman, who was afterwards one of Weber's most zealous supporters. Days were thus spent in musical studies or exercises, under Vogler's advice and superintendence, although Carl Maria cannot be said to have been precisely a pupil of the Abbé's at this period. The three young men frequently accompanied the greatest organ-player of his age, as Vogler indisputably was, to one of the churches of the little capital; and never, as Weber was wont afterwards to say, did the Abbé pour forth such wondrous angel-tones, or thunder peals on the instrument in such rich beauties of fancy, as when he thus sat and played alone for his "three dear boys."

The old master, whose grave frowning face had never known a smile, grew young again amidst the vivifying rays of young genius, which he truly felt were sparkling around him. "Ah! had I been forced to leave the world before I had formed these two," he

afterwards said of Weber and Mayerbeer, "I should have died a miserable man."

But life at Darmstadt was cruelly unattractive to Carl Maria, after the charming happy days of Manheim and Heidelberg. "I only take up my dull goose-quill," he wrote to Gottfried Weber, "to tell you, in the dullest words, how dull I feel in this dull Darmstadt." Occasionally, it is true, friends would come over to him; and then, as he said, "the sun would shine through the prison-bars of the poor artist starving on love's bread and water." With Gänsbacher and young Mayerbeer, however, he would do his best to snatch a few rays of life's joyousness. But what was to be done in that town of an order and discipline almost military, where people would run to the windows with astonishment, if forms, without uniform or measured step, should be passing along the street? The three did their best, and, when they could escape from the "old fellows," would "shake off their dust," as Weber said, and stroll into the still streets to make music as they went. Then merry Carl Maria would jump upon some garden-table of a pothouse, with his guitar around his neck, and sing, with his old mad joviality, his most roguish songs to the soldiers and their girls, until the "welkin rang" with the loud merriment. Or the young men went "a melody hunting," and snatched new inspiration from the popular ditties of the day. Out of some such common tune would afterwards grow a master melody, which bore about as much resemblance to the original as the brilliant butterfly to the dingy chrysalis. The

principal idea of the famous "Invitation to the Waltz," and of the ballet music in the third act of "Oberon," thus, it is said, sprang into existence. Weak-minded critics made it a reproach to the great master, in after years, that he thus caught inspiration on the wing; as if it were not the attribute of creative genius to light a flame at a mere faint spark, which itself flickers, vanishes, and is extinct.

The young men must have found their sources of fun somewhat barren: one of their merriest jokes they owed to Carl Maria's dog, whom he had named "Ma'mselle." When a pretty girl passed in the street, "Ma'mselle! Ma'mselle!" was called, until the damsel turned, looked round, to the great delight of the young fellows, and then was made to understand that it was to the dog the name applied. Or they sat on the bench before the Rhine-gate eating cherries for a wager; the one who eat up his own parcel first, receiving a fourth extra-supply as his reward. Simple enough were these little jocosities. And yet the precise little town found plentiful food for scandal in discussing these excesses of wanton youth; and even the Grand Duke himself took occasion to grumble against these skittish young fellows, who would go their ways in such an objectionably independent manner, and actually shirked the opportunities for attending his august opera rehearsals.

Occasions there certainly were, when Darmstadt and Manheim made pilgrimages, at the same time, to Heidelberg, where "commers" parties were still held with wine-bibbing students; and when Darmstadt

would then go to Manheim, or Manheim to Darmstadt, to sleep off the effects of the last night's liquor, and find an excuse in "Katzenjammer" for lingering on a few days longer from home. Art, however, cannot be said to have lost by these wanderings. Wherever they went, the young brethren in art conjured up a magic circle of artistic enjoyment around them. In the families they visited, especial admiration was excited by many a musical duet between the two most genial and attractive geniuses and best pianoforte players of the company, Carl Maria and young Mayerbeer. On these occasions, an air was generally given for improvisation by a lady of the party, sometimes two airs, the most incongruous in their nature, which the two young artists were to work up together, and often under the most absurd conditions, such as the taking each other up in the middle of a passage, or the avoidance of certain transitions or forms. These fantastic improvisations of the two youths on two pianos invariably excited the most ardent enthusiasm, as science and melody combined streamed from their facile fingers; and all the delighted hearers were wont to declare that never were greater gems of art composed by the two, than the music which flowed from them in these extempore effusions.

There was a reciprocal advantage in the new friendships here formed by young Mayerbeer. He, on the one hand, had the delight of hearing his beautiful Klopstock songs admirably executed under Gottfried Weber's direction; and on the other hand, the Manheimers thoroughly enjoyed, after another fashion,

the caviare, Pomeranian goose-breasts, and other delicacies, which good papa Beer was accustomed to send to his industrious child at Darmstadt, and which the good-tempered boy often allowed to vanish down other throats, to the accompaniment of music and song, without having one scrap left for himself.

As early as the month of March 1810, Carl Maria had received from Hiemer the words of the operetta of "Abu Hassan," which he once had been so anxious to obtain. But the subject now reminded him of a time which he would fain have wholly forgotten, and was distasteful to him. His opera of "Sylvana" ran in his head. He had gone through it to his friends at Stift Neuburg with general applause; and all his yearnings now were for the subject of another grand romantic opera. Full of this besetting idea, he could only find fancy for analogous melodies. Many flowed from his fertile brain, some of which were to find their place long afterwards. Thus, whilst one evening at Stift Neuburg he was leaning out of the window, commanding a view of the most romantic beauty, in an apartment which he occupied with his friend Dusch, chattering, humming, dreaming in the sweet air of a bright moonlight night in spring, he burst out into a melody, which was, long years yet to come, to form the introductory fairy chorus in "Oberon." Another melody streamed forth to the words of "Ah, Fatima beloved!" in "Abu Hassan," as he threw off his clothes to retire at last to bed. The next morning both were forgotten. But Dusch had treasured them. He took a sly opportunity of repeating them; when

Weber flew at him, took him by the throat, and laughingly exclaimed, "You scoundrel! you have stolen that out of my head, where I had happened to mislay it."

Full as Carl Maria was at this period of his idea of a new romantic opera, he stumbled, strange to say, upon a subject, into which he was long afterwards to pour all the true essence of his genius. It came before him suddenly like a spectre—a shadowy spectre yet. It was summer-time now. The young friends were again at beautiful Stift Neuburg. One of the books lying about in the drawing-room fell into their hands. It was Apel's "Ghost-Stories." They skimmed the book together. One story especially arrested their attention; and both exclaimed with one breath, "What a fine subject for an opera!" This story was called "Der Freischütz." The young men started off at once to Manheim with their prize. The early dawn of the next morning found them sitting together on Dusch's sofa, after a whole night of labour, with pale cheeks and burning heads, but sparkling eyes. The whole opera-book was constructed—some scenes were sketched out. Dusch undertook to write the words at once. But pressing business-affairs came in his way. Carl Maria again took heart to work at "Abu Hassan;" and "Der Freischütz" was laid aside. No doubt the truest interests of art had won thereby. The work of 1810 could never have been the work of the matured genius of 1821; and never perhaps would Weber then have found a subject so congenial to his soul, so fitted to enhance his fame, as was, in after years, "Der Freischütz."

In all his pleasant intercourse with friends, young Weber had not forgotten the main purpose of his present life. Letters from Vogler to the Prince Bishop Carl von Dalberg promised him a harvest at Aschaffenburg: and thither he bent his way. The Prince Bishop received the young artist with friendly amenity, invited him to supper, but laughingly shook his head at any thought of a concert at the palace. All his little court was laid up, he said; one had a swelled face—another a bad eye—a third a fit of gout—a fourth a bad attack of rheumatism—and all the rest the influenza. What was to be done? A private concert in the town was arranged, however; and it put a few florins into the needy artist's purse. Thence with letters of introduction from Count Benzel-Sternau to Prince Leiningen at Amorbach. Here again Carl Maria was received with simple and sincere kind-heartedness, and afforded every opportunity most favourable to his talent. The prospect of many pleasant days amidst the princely family was before him, when Weber heard by chance that his generous and enlightened patron, Prince Eugen of Würtemberg, his amiable host of Carlsruhe in Silesia, would be in Frankfort on the 3d of May. Carl Maria burned with desire to explain to the man, he so much reverenced and loved, the true circumstances of his ignominious exile from Stuttgart, to exonerate himself of all in which he had been maligned, to beg for an indulgent judgment of his follies and errors. He hurried to Frankfort. The duke received him with open arms, and

tears in his eyes, and refused to separate himself from the poor youth until the hour of his departure on the following morning. And so the night was passed between the two in grave and earnest discourse; the duke stretched upon the bed to snatch a little rest, with Carl Maria by his side, till morning dawned. When the travelling-carriage was at the gate, the duke once more pressed Carl Maria to his heart, assured him of his own conviction of his thorough innocence, passed a valuable ring from his own finger to the youth's hand, and went his way.

Carl Maria was in luck at Frankfort. He was enabled to find in Simrock, the musical publisher, a purchaser for his cantata, "The First Tone," his great Polonaise in E, a quartett, his Potpourri for the violoncello, and six songs. Can it be said, "in luck," however? For all this music he could only wring out of his publisher the sum of 150 florins. By the Polonaise alone, which became a favourite piano piece, Simrock made many thousands!

The end of May found Carl Maria once more in Manheim and Heidelberg. In the former town his principal object was to be present at the production of his good friend Gänsbacher's symphony at a Museum concert. He availed himself of the opportunity, however, to give to the public of Manheim two new compositions—the rondo and adagio of his own splendid Piano Concerto, No. 1; and the charming rondo, "O dolce speranza," with opening recitative "Il momento s'avvicina," written for Mademoiselle Frank, the singer; both of which pieces were repeated by accla-

mation. Gänsbacher's symphony wearied by its length; and thus Carl Maria carried off all the honours of the evening. A notice of this concert was published by him in the "Leipsiker Allgemeine Musik-zeitung," without the slightest mention of his own successes. His careful criticism of Gänsbacher's symphony showed, at the same time, how conscientious he could be, even in the judgment of his dearest friend.

In Heidelberg the concert was for his own benefit. For this latter occasion he wrote an Andante and variations for violoncello with full band, for the purpose of producing the talent of his amiable and talented friend Alexander von Dusch to the best advantage. It was a glorious day for Heidelberg, when two such petted favourites of the town, as Dusch and Carl Maria, were to unite their efforts on one evening; and it terminated, of course, with a thorough jubilee in the shape of an uproarious "commers" with the admiring band of students. A little more money flowed from this concert into the struggling artist's purse.

Thence started Carl Maria as fast as he could for Darmstadt, where the Abbé Vogler's pupils were arranging a musical festivity to celebrate the 61st birthday of their much-respected master, familiarly called by all "Papa." For the musical composition of a required ode, all the three young fellows were ready enough; but for this ode the poetry was wanting. None was willing to renounce the musical share of the partition of labour; so, it was decided that the less cherished part of poetaster should be decided by

lot. It was so: and the lot fell to Carl Maria. Each now strove to do their best in amiable rivalry. All felt that it was probably the last and only occasion, when it might be granted them to do honour to the old master, united in that bond. Maria's verses were pleasant, to the point, and warm from his heart: as high poetical effusions they were not perhaps distinguished. The composition of two solos fell to Gänsbacher—a terzett and chorus to young Mayerbeer. Nothing, even at that time, could exceed the glow and simple fervour of the boy Mayerbeer's birthday composition. The rehearsals were pursued with as much zeal as love and reverence. Besides the three young artists, several of the most distinguished ladies and gentlemen of the town, among whom happened to be Theresa Beer, Mayerbeer's sister, took part in the arrangements. The old musician's bust was crowned by the hands of his three children in art. His rooms were adorned with garlands, woven by the ladies. The last few dearly-earned florins of Carl Maria and Gänsbacher were spent upon a banquet, to be offered to the great musician and the assistants in the festivity. Vogler, then busied with the unceasing rehearsals of his opera of "Samori" for the Darmstadt theatre, knew nothing of the festivities prepared, until he was solemnly led into the apartment to hear the ode so lovingly composed in his honour. The capricious old Abbé had been mortified that morning by not receiving any flattering notice of such an important day from the Grand Duke. The great ones of the earth had failed: his vanity

was wounded: and the poor artist-choir was destined to feel the smart. The old gentleman received the well-meant honours coldly. An icy breath soon chilled all the heart's warmth of the ardent executants; and it needed all the efforts of the three young artists to promote a partial thaw.

Spite of this little ebullition of temper, the Abbé Vogler was sincerely attached to his "dear boys." Of Carl Maria's critical acumen, as well as of his creative powers, he had a great idea: and, with this feeling, he set the youth to work upon a lengthy notice of twelve chorales by Sebastian Bach, which the Abbé himself was then arranging. The task was a weighty one. It might do him credit, or, as he wrote to Gottfried Weber, in a highly characteristic and humorous letter, "bring a whole pack of hounds upon his back." He felt too, very probably, that the free expression of his own opinions would be denied him. But he set to work at last with a cheerful spirit, and completed his article, which was duly published, without the disastrous effects he feared, of being "hunted down with a tantivy." Again, the Abbé showed his partiality for the young composer by urging Carl Maria to accompany him on an artistic journey to Frankfort and Mayence.

In many ways was this journey to be of importance in young Weber's destiny. He had already received from the Director of the Frankfort National Theatre the intimation that his opera of "Sylvana" might be produced upon those boards. On his arrival in Frankfort with Vogler, however, he found this hope

a "hope deferred." But any heart's sickness at this little disappointment was neutralised by the discovery that his old Stuttgart flame, the heroine of so many of his follies, the warmly loved Gretchen Lang, was then in Frankfort. Vogler was forgotten on the instant; and to his charming little songstress Carl Maria rushed. But times were changed. Perhaps the little lady's love had cooled, or flown elsewhere. Perhaps the youth himself found that the ideal, so cherished in memory, lost its brightness before the searching light of reality. No one was behind the scenes at the last act of their little drama to tell the hows or whys; but all was over. Although Carl Maria passed almost every hour of his stay in Frankfort by his Gretchen's side, the once-loving pair parted from each other coldly: and thus was the youth healed of a passion, which, if renewed, might again have exercised a blighting influence on his path of life. It was by a strange trick of fate, that on the very last evening, when Carl Maria sat by the side of the once-beloved at a public concert, his eyes first fell upon a sweet and lovely girl, who stepped into the orchestra to sing an air by Paër. His last words of love to Gretchen Lang were spoken at the hour when his looks first lighted upon Caroline Brandt—upon her who was afterwards to be his much-loving, much-beloved wife!

Vogler had secured his customary triumphs on the organ in Frankfort, Mayence, Hanau, and Offenbach; at which latter place the young composer again parted with his Piano Concerto, his Symphony, and

six unwritten Sonatas to André the publisher, for another poor sum of 150 florins. So master and pupil now returned; and it was resolved that Carl Maria should be dispatched to Baden-Baden with an introduction to the Crown Prince of Bavaria, who was then staying there, as Munich was to be the next central point of the young composer's further art-journeyings. In his passage through Manheim he was joined by the whole joyous artist band, with the charming wife of Gottfried Weber at their head, all anxious for a merry holiday in Baden's sweetest valley. A travelling carriage was packed with guitars, musical scores, and bottles of wine: and in this cosy little nest of pleasant humour the whole party rolled on to Baden-Baden.

Baden-Baden was not at the commencement of the nineteenth century what it has become within the last fifty years—a splendid, whirling, masquerading Parisian casino. The wondrous natural beauties of its situation could then be enjoyed by all in purity and peace. It was more frequented by Germans of all ranks in society, than by the modern invading host of foreigners. So full was it, however, when the Manheim party arrived, that with difficulty roofs could be found, under which they could rest their travel-weary heads. The lodging of many was but humble: but the days at Baden-Baden were free and happy ones—brief, however; for the friends soon parted. Carl Maria was left alone to his fate: and now his "mocking genius," as he expressed it in a letter to Gänsbacher, "had smiled too long not to

wish to play some confounded prank." His journeys and excursions had cost him far more money than he could well afford: and a concert alone could repair the loss. He had great hopes in the patronage of the Crown Prince of Bavaria, to whom he had given Vogler's letter, and who had welcomed him most kindly. The promised arrival of the tenor Berger from Manheim, with all the necessary music, was anxiously awaited: but neither tenor nor music came. Not even a piano, such as an artist could play upon, could be found in all the place. Public report spoke of a famous instrument at Rastadt. Carl Maria hurried over to that neighbouring fortress town, but in vain: the owner of the precious prize was absent on a journey. The departure of the Crown Prince could no longer be delayed. So poor Carl Maria bowed his head to his "mocking genius;" and the desired concert was given up in despair. But even in the midst of these perplexities, the young artist had not only enjoyed the society of many old friends, but had made acquaintance with many men of distinction and influence; among others, the celebrated poet Tieck, and the famous publisher Cotta, who begged young Weber for contributions from his pen in the "Morgenblatt." The chief friend and associate, however, of his days at Baden-Baden was the Crown Prince of Bavaria, who, as Weber writes, wandered whole nights long with him in the lovely valley, listening to his serenades.

The Crown Prince, afterwards King Louis of Bavaria, known to the world as the remodeller of his

capital, the brilliant modern Athens of Germany in his day, and enrolled in the annals of German History as one of the greatest prince-patrons of all talent, was a worshipper of art in every branch. He was no mean poet himself, and he had an artist's soul. No one knew better than himself the influence upon the cultivation and progress of a people to be derived from the intercourse with artists. He opened his heart to them willingly. Carl Maria, then, in his usual seductive, jovial, straightforward way, felt himself happy and at home in the company of the prince, with whom he could associate, as artist with artist, in sympathy and kindred spirit.

Meanwhile, however, finances called urgently for immediate help. So again he set out on another journey, of which Frankfort was to be the principal destination. His "Abu Hassan," upon which he was now writing diligently, and which was completed in the November of the same year, was to accompany him as his chief occupation and his solace. In Darmstadt he lingered for a while. Influential friends at the little court had given him hopes that he might at last be permitted to play before the Grand Duke, who as yet had never smiled upon him with especial favour, and thus win over that really sincere patron of all true art. But the intention fell to the ground. The Abbé Vogler had visibly sunk in the Grand Ducal graces: his pride was hurt; and he refused to stir. "If I were he," wrote Carl Maria to Gottfried Weber, "I would no longer remain in a position in which it was made clear to me, that I was so little wanted;

but he seems used to neglect, and goes on vegetating." So Carl Maria gave a hug to "the little bear" (Mayerbeer), who, as he wrote in the same characteristic letter to his friend, "has got your sonata in his paws, and is sucking all the honey out of it;" and again left Darmstadt, where he had never felt himself at home; and where, as he himself expressed it, "no feeling would expand, and no fresh fountain of idea flow." And so, on again to Manheim, and to Heidelberg. At the latter place another concert was crowned with success—the important success of money to the artist's pocket—and gave him, what was even still more worth to his kind heart, the happy feeling, as he wrote to Gänsbacher, that he had "friends whose dear affection and respect outweighed whole years of sorrow and distress."

On the 26th of August, Carl Maria was again in Frankfort. At last his "Sylvana" was to be put into rehearsal. Margarethe Lang, since his last visit, had been secured for the Frankfort opera. She had appeared in Cherubini's "Lodoiska," and had won all hearts by her grace, her talent as an actress, and, above all, by the thoroughly dramatic feeling of her style of singing. It might have been presumed that she had a sufficiently strong sentiment for her young old friend still lingering in her heart to have used her rising influence on the Frankfort boards in the interests of his opera. But when Carl Maria besought her to undertake the part of Mechtilde, written wholly in accordance with her own whims and fancies, Mademoiselle Gretchen was tricky. She most posi-

tively refused. Weber visited her, however; went with her to rehearsal; and by the side of this being, to whom his young warm heart had sacrificed so great a portion of his past repute, listened to the first strains of this work, from which he hoped so much for his future fame. That new fame was budding, as the old love withered.

The part of Sylvana, the dumb-girl, was naturally given to the member of the company who could combine consummate talent as an actress, and grace in pantomimic delineation, with the requisite gifts as a singer. And who was this? Who, but the same little charming laughing Caroline Brandt whom he had before admired at the concert? She had a marvellous combination of qualities for the stage. Her grace of movement, joined to her sylph-like figure and her little foot, made men regret she was not a dancer; whilst her pretty drollery, her simple-minded dash of manner, and her sweet natural coquetry excited the desire to see her talent confined to the dramatic stage alone. But then her highly sympathetic, admirably trained soprano voice was so remarkable, that it would have been a sin had she not been an opera singer. Caroline Brandt's peculiar charm of style was such, that she may be said to have created for herself an entirely new conception of the manner, in which the parts of young sentimental ladies, ingénues, and boys, were to be represented; so much there lay in that mixture of spirit and yet modesty, of naturalness and yet grace, which was wholly her own. The rehearsals brought Carl Maria in contact

with this highly interesting young artist. From her charms as a woman he at first received no impression; his heart perhaps still listened to the last faint echoes of a love whose song was ended. But he recognised at once her talent, and was enchanted with the promise of her Sylvana.

The truest zeal to serve the young composer, and do honour to his composition, animated the whole orchestra as well as opera-troop of the Frankfort theatre. All were prepossessed in his favour as well by his amiable, gentlemanly, conciliatory manners, as by his tact and thorough practical knowledge of the stage. Madame Schönberger, the prima donna, who had undertaken the character of Mechtilde, was enrolled, heart and soul, on Carl Maria's side. The rehearsals were eminently satisfactory; the ensemble was good; and every thing promised a most successful result; when suddenly a dark cloud appeared upon the composer's bright firmament of hope. This cloud was the balloon of the celebrated Madame Blanchard. Balloon ascents in those days were extraordinary events, which, whenever they took place, were sure to absorb all the interest of the public far more than the first representation of the best opera by the most celebrated composer. And how was a young beginner to struggle against such far superior attractions? As poor Carl Maria's evil genius would have it, Madame Blanchard's ascent was advertised for Sunday the 17th of September, the very day when "Sylvana" was to be produced. The excitement in the town was tremendous; the

name of the stout female aëronaut was in every mouth; tickets to see the show were fought for at the ticket-office; the balloon was the lion of the day. Vainly was the hour of performance changed; the great counter-attraction carried off the victory. Poor "Sylvana" found but few followers; and the unlucky composer's name and fame were crushed by those of the mighty Madame Blanchard. Vainly had all Carl Maria's eager friends streamed over from Manheim, Heidelberg, and Darmstadt, with Vogler and young Mayerbeer amongst the number, to be first in the theatre, and give their support to the young composer. The attention of the audience was disturbed; amidst the general whispering and chattering over the great event of the day many a beauty was lost; the very singers themselves were pre-occupied, and far from being up to the mark: the opera went far less steadily than at the last general rehearsal.

The blow to the poor young composer was indeed a hard one. Nevertheless the opera pleased unquestionably. Several pieces were greatly applauded; the song for Krips, the brightest gem of the opera, was encored; the composer was loudly called for at the end. Carl Maria drew back from the acclamation anxious, ashamed, afraid: but Caroline Brandt took his unwilling hand, and dragged him before the curtain. Little did the youth then know, that the hand which clasped his was one day to be his own for life—that from that hand he was destined to receive his life's greatest happiness!

Carl Maria's remuneration for his opera amounted

to no more than 100 florins. But in his condition of pressing want that sum appeared to him a treasure. Be it said to his credit that he sent away the money to clear off some of his heaviest debts at Stuttgart; and again, as he said, he had "nothing but a little talent left in the cupboard." The young man's scant mention of the result of his opera in a letter to Gottfried Weber is characteristic enough. "Sylvana has certainly pleased," he writes, "and, I presume, has made a remarkable impression, inasmuch as people say that it is not stolen from Wenzel Müller, nor, as far as they know, from any body else."

Once the excitement and anxieties of the production of "Sylvana" over, Carl Maria returned to work seriously on new compositions of weight, at Darmstadt. He worked stoutly also, although dull old Darmstadt grew less and less congenial to his heart. Gänsbacher was gone to Prague to resume his position as man of business in the house of Count Firmian; and Carl Maria's spirits began to fail him. "The present condition of my affairs does not allow me to stir," he wrote to his now absent friend Gänsbacher; "but I feel that things would go better with me could I leave this leathern old town." Even in his sadness, however, the youth's innate joviality of humour cannot be suppressed. "Our ugly creature of a maid," he writes, in conclusion, "is actually going to be married; to a respectable clerk too, who is said to be fond of his bottle, but otherwise is doubtless a most worthy fellow. The little bear writes canzonettes and psalms. The old

gentleman" (Vogler) "consumes enormous quantities of snuff. Mariane snivels, and Therese sings as out of tune as ever. The family is increased by an abominable black poodle, which Beer's servant is always thrashing, and his master always hugging. And here you have a full and correct account of the entire household!" In a letter too, of the same period, written to congratulate Gottfried Weber on the birth of a child, his buoyant humour goes hand in hand with his unwilling melancholy. "I am almost sorry it is a boy," he writes, after a few sweet words of heartfelt congratulation; "we shall have too many composers of the name of Weber. Of course the fellow will be a composer—that is a settled thing! I have no doubt you have already been teaching the babe thorough-bass: and harmony of course he has learned before he was born. I should like to see you in all your paternal glories; but, alas, no such luck lies before me! Poor devil as I am, I must live on the mere fancy. . . . Just now, you must be your dear wife's alone. But try and think sometimes of one poor orphaned Weber far away. Let me pause a bit—I am getting weak."

Carl Maria was roused, however, out of his melancholy train of thought in Darmstadt by letters from Frankfort, which assured him that the public was anxious to see the composer of "Sylvana," and hear him play; and that, consequently, a concert given by him there would be sure to be highly remunerative. The first production of any new composition on the occasion, he was told, would flatter

the vanity of the rich Frankfort traders. So he finished off at once his piano concerto, and started for Frankfort, full of the brightest hopes; taking Offenbach on his way, in order to leave the improvised Sonatas in the hands of André, the publisher.

Carl Maria was kindly received by the influential publisher, who, during his visit, took him, as an especial favour shown to few, to a certain cabinet, opened it with care, and taking out a written music score, placed it with solemn reverence in the young composer's hands. "What do you mean?" asked Weber, astonished; "what am I to do with this pale copy of one of Mozart's Sonatas? for such it seems to be." "It is no copy," exclaimed the publisher; "it is written by the own hand of the immortal man! I have many of his scores." An electric blow ran through the whole of Carl Maria's frame. He laid the score with awe upon the table, fell on his knees, touched the sacred pages with his lips and forehead, and then gave them back with streaming eyes to André, stammering forth the words, "How happy is the paper which his hands have touched!"

Every preparation had been made for the important concert; all promised a successful result: and poor Carl Maria's needs were urgent. Full of the most joyous hopes he arrived at Frankfort on the 20th October, and, to his consternation, found the whole town in a state of excitement, to which that caused by Madame Blanchard's balloon ascent was mere child's-play. This time it was no less a person-

age than the Emperor Napoleon, who, with his all-powerful hand, had played the poor youth this scurvy trick. A decree, issued from Fontainebleau on the 12th September 1810, had ordained that fresh and stringent measures should be taken to support the harsh system of the Continental blockade. The strict prohibition against importing English manufactures was no longer to be sufficient. Orders were issued that all English wares, wherever discovered, should be immediately seized and destroyed, without any compensation to the owners. The whole trading town of Frankfort was in a state of grim uproar. It was patent enough that this reckless measure could never be enforced without brutal compulsion by the hands of the military. Frankfort was full of English wares. The cry of indignation on every side was loud; and it was clear that all possible opposition would be offered to the execution of the abhorred edict. On the very day when Weber's concert was to have been given, the troops marched into the town. Shutters were smashed, doors broken open, warehouses ransacked. Throughout all Frankfort the only sounds heard were the crashing of chests and barrels; the angry lamentations of the despoiled; and the laughter, shrieks, and yells of the French soldiers, who danced in insolent triumph round the fires, blazing in every street to consume the costly silks, cotton stuffs, and pieces of clothing,—barring such as the troops themselves carried off as booty,—the precious spices and the teas. Poor Carl Maria's concert was smashed in the general destruction. In a very few days he

turned his back upon the doomed city, and shook the dust off his feet in sorrow, anger, and disgust. But everywhere he went, his evil star was still in the ascendant. On visiting his publisher André, at Offenbach, on his journey back from delusive Frankfort, he had the mortification of getting his own sonatas returned upon his hands. "The fellow actually told me," he wrote to Gottfried Weber, "they were far too good, and must be made more commonplace for sale. I declared most positively that I could not write trash, and that I would not: and so we parted in the sulks." And so came Carl Maria back again to his uncongenial home in Darmstadt a still poorer and a sadder man. But Darmstadt was speedily unendurable. There was no merry Gänsbacher to cheer his flagging spirits now. Hard-working, indefatigable young Mayerbeer was far too diligently employed to afford him much companionship. Delighted he was, then, to seize the occasion of an invitation from Gottfried Weber to come over to Manheim, and aid him in the arrangement of a concert to be given in honour of the amiable and universally-beloved hereditary Grand Duchess, Stephanie of Baden. Besides, a project was just then being matured, for the furtherance of which the direct and active coöperation of the two friends—Gottfried and Carl Maria—was considered indispensable. November saw the young composer once more in Manheim.

The project was the final foundation of a strictly-organised literary coöperation among all the young

worshippers of art, united in such firm bonds of friendship at Manheim or Darmstadt. It is a remarkable circumstance in the annals of art that five young men should have been thus collected, all of whom were not only gifted with rare talent as musicians, but able, at the same time, to give expression to their highly-cultivated thoughts in a masterly manner with their pens. Musical criticism was, generally speaking, in far from a healthy state throughout Germany; and it had long since been resolved that a secret society should be founded among these gifted young men, for the purpose of giving a sound and worthy direction to the musical cultivation of the day by a series of articles of their own. The time was now come when this purpose might be put into practical execution; and under Weber's inspiring direction all now combined to establish that "Harmonic Society" to which allusion has already been made. The aim of the young men was to criticise as well as to produce; to speak out in the truest interests of art as well as to practise. They were alike animated by the resolution to advance all that was honourable, true, and praiseworthy, without prejudice, as without selfishness.

The statutes of this society were drawn up by Carl Maria's hand; and their clear, practical, honourable provisions speak volumes for the young artist's high sense of duty, as well as for his rare talent for organisation. This club, the workings of which were to be kept strictly secret, was to consist of men alone who were alike composers and literati,

and whose honourable characters were proved and known to each other. One of the chief purposes of the society was to bring forward genuine young talent wherever it might be found, and at the same time to warn the world of all that was false or bad in art, however much supported it might be for unworthy motives by the critical authorities of the day. Themselves and each other the members of the society were never to consider, except in as far as brotherly assistance might be given in the way of protection from injustice and from envy. Pseudonyms were to be assumed by each of the members as signatures to their literary productions: Carl Maria took that of "Melos," Gottfried Weber that of "Giusto," Alexander von Dusch that of "Unknown Man," Meyerbeer that of "Philodikaios," and Gänsbacher that of "Triole." All set to work on this new scheme for forwarding the interests of art: but the zeal of most grew cool when the chances of life dispersed them through the world. Carl Maria held on the last, following up the provisions of this admirably constituted society, until it was at length tacitly dissolved.

It was Gottfried Weber's most ardent desire to see his young friend Carl Maria so attached to Manheim, in some way or other, that he might be induced to remain wholly there. With this hope, he was resolved that every thing should be done at the concert given in honour of the Hereditary Grand Duchess Stephanie, for which he summoned the young composer, to place him in a prominent and distinguished position. He was to sit at the piano immediately

opposite the amiable Princess; he was to play several of his most favourite compositions. Among other pieces, Carl Maria executed his famous piano concerto for the first time in its entirety. The Princess was enchanted; and, contrary to all usual etiquette, on the termination of the concert, she advanced, accompanied by her Oberhofmeisterinn, Countess Walsch, to greet the young man, and said that she had heard so much from her cousin, Ludwig of Bavaria, of his beautiful singing to the guitar, that she should feel personally obliged if he would allow her also the chance of enjoying so great a pleasure. A guitar was fetched; and, standing in the midst of a small circle of the court party, Carl Maria sung some of his most pathetic and some of his sprightliest songs. The Princess, now with tears in her eyes, now with laughter on her lips, forgot all, to linger on, and hear more and yet still more. When at last, after a long conversation with Carl Maria, she retired, all flocked around him with congratulations; and when the Chamberlain of the Princess returned to ask, by her command, upon what conditions young Weber could be induced to remain in Manheim, Gottfried fell upon his friend's neck with tears of joy, and exclaimed, "Now you are won to us for ever!" But Carl Maria stood alone unmoved. "No," he said, shaking his head with a bitter smile; "I know the influence of my evil star. It will come to nothing. Such happiness were won too lightly."

There is no doubt that Weber's talents might have been admirably employed at Manheim. It had

long been the wish of every body that the opera conductor, Peter Ritter, should be pensioned off. He was considered to have grown lazy, and neglectful of his duties. It was evidently the desire of the Hereditary Grand Duchess to obtain this position for her young protégé. Should that fail, she trusted to retain him in her own service. Frequent conferences were held in consequence between her Chamberlain and Carl Maria. She herself invited the young composer continually to her palace, to sing or play with her. Spite his presentiment, the young man could not but be buoyed up by hope. Some of his happiest bits in "Abu Hassan" were composed at this period. Merry songs were translated by him from the Italian. Another successful concert at Manheim animated still more his renovated spirits; all was beginning once more to shine on him with brightness.

But Carl Maria was right. His "evil star" maintained its sway. One morning, at the close of the year, Herr von Berstett, the Chamberlain of the Hereditary Grand Duchess, entered his room. He had to announce with the deepest regret, from the Princess, that all her hopes were over. It was found impossible to remove Ritter, so as to give young Weber the post of conductor; and the state of the Princess's own treasury forbade her to undertake a charge which would have attached him to her own small court. After his long and expensive stay, such was his new-year's gift to start him in the coming year of 1811.

This last kick, which Carl Maria received as fate's football, drove him straight to a resolve which had as yet appeared but dim and distant to him. He would wander forth again, the strolling "art-pedlar," and seek his fortune in the world.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE WORLD.

It must be confessed that it was not purely artistic reasons alone which urged the young composer to hasten his projected journey at the commencement of the year 1811. There were other far less æsthetical motives for its speedy accomplishment. His resources were so completely exhausted for the moment, that, in order to pay his share of a little country excursion with his friends, from which he could not well absent himself, he was obliged secretly to part with his last new pair of nether garments. This distressing state of things was principally caused by the hindrances thrown in the way of a second concert in Manheim, which his friends had arranged for him, and from which he expected a sure remunerative return.

There can be no doubt that it was entirely through the underhand intrigues of Capellmeister Ritter, who after the late occurrences bore a bitter grudge against the young man, that this cruel disappointment was caused. The entire orchestra of

the Manheim theatre, hitherto so kindly disposed to the young composer, refused to take part in the projected concert. The insult fell even more heavily on poor Carl Maria's heart than the pecuniary disappointment. It may be that the gentlemen of the orchestra, who had it pretty much their own way under their indolent conductor, had looked with dire apprehension on the possible appointment of a young man full of fire and zeal; more probably there had been considerable pressure from above. The reason given was, that by one of the bye-laws of the theatre the orchestra was forbidden to play for any stranger during the course of their own winter concerts. This pretext had all the appearance of being reasonable enough. But a few days afterwards, on the arrival of two wandering artists, the whole band was permitted to play at their concert. Again and again the same occurred. Carl Maria was wounded to the quick. He made a great mistake, however, by publishing, in the "Leipsiger Allgemeine Musikzeitung," a severe article against the Manheim orchestra and its conductor, in which he announced it to be "his bounden duty to expose before the public, and to the warning of other artists, proceedings so arbitrary and so shuffling." By this indiscreet publication Carl Maria created an irreparable breach between himself and the whole band of Manheim artists. Any artistic career in the town, for which he cherished so much affection, was thus closed to him entirely. Nothing remained for him but to go.

It was a sad blow for Carl Maria to bid farewell

to friends, from whom he was probably to be parted for long time, and whose happy collaboration with him might now perhaps cease for ever; from those who had given the homeless young artist an asylum and a home; from those, above all, in whose worthy society, as he felt in his inmost heart, he had received a regeneration of his whole being. No less sad was the parting to all those who loved the youth so well. With every individual friend, in the circle of every family, the same melancholy scene of leave-taking was renewed, until the poor young fellow's heart nigh broke. On the eve immediately preceding his departure, he sat in Dusch's room, with sunken head and full eyes, at the piano, and extemporised that exquisitely pathetic song, "The Artist's Farewell;" which, with other words, was afterwards known to the world, and found sympathy in every heart.

It was necessary first to return to the detested Darmstadt. But here, much to Carl Maria's surprise, the first light began to dawn through the dark cloud around him. His operetta of "Abu Hassan" was now fully finished. By Vogler's advice he was induced to dedicate this work to the Grand Duke. "I have dressed up the fellow," he wrote to Gottfried Weber, "in smart red binding, and sent him, with the due dedication to the Grand Duke. Who knows what he will say to it? Perhaps, if he is in good humour, '*Musje, je tiens bocup de ce.*'" Whether the Grand Duke actually said as much, in his usual bad French, must remain unknown. Something of the kind he probably did say; for the ice at last was

broken. A Grand Ducal autograph speedily assured the young composer of the entire Grand Ducal satisfaction: a purse containing forty golden Carolines from the Grand Ducal treasury was perhaps, at that moment, an even more welcome testimonial. Those bright pieces of gold were indeed dazzling rays of light. Moreover, as a mark of especial grace and favour, Weber was offered a concert, for his own benefit, which Grand Duke and Duchess both promised to honour with their august presence. Surprise upon surprise! Carl Maria set to work with delight upon the preparations for his concert, which was fixed for the 6th February. The Grand Duke took no less than 120 tickets. What could all Darmstadt do but follow the Grand Ducal example with enthusiastic loyalty? The affluence to Weber's concert was tremendous. A new duet, composed by him for the occasion—a duet written, as he himself expressed in a letter to Gottfried Weber, "in such a confoundedly Italian style, that it might pass for one of Farinelli's"—was sung by the Darmstadt prima donna, Madame Schönberger, and the daughter of the musical conductor, Mangold, a fine contralto. The Grand Duke himself led the way in the applause; the success of this new production was immense: the duet had to be repeated. The Grand Duke congratulated the young composer, with his own august mouth, gave him, then and there, a theme, upon which he desired variations to be written, and suggested that this new piece should be dedicated to the Grand Duchess. All then was honour

and glory in this lucky concert—not barren either; for it left a clear profit of 200 florins.

The public had left the concert-room. Carl Maria remained lost in not unpleasing thoughts. On looking up, he saw two forms still in the hall. Before him stood, to his delight, his two friends, Dusch and Gottfried Weber, from whom he thought he had taken a "long, long farewell." The good souls had not been able to resist the yearning to be present at his concert. For a short time that four-leafed blossom of art was to bloom again in Darmstadt; Gottfried Weber, Dusch, Mayerbeer, and Carl Maria lived again, for a brief space, that true artist's life of joyous humour, rich interchange of feeling and sympathy in art, which they had led in the happy summer of 1810. But on the 10th February, friends Gottfried and Alexander were constrained to return to their homes; and on the 12th, "the little bear" trotted onwards, likewise, on his path of life. Carl Maria was once more alone. "Shall I ever again find in the world friends so dear, and men so true?" were the despairing words inscribed in his diary of that date. Sixteen years later, only shortly before his death, he wrote down on the same page, a "No!"

Carl Maria would have departed on his way at once. One circumstance detained him for a while. In the first flush of the young composer's favour at court, mention had been made of his permanent appointment as Grand Ducal Musical Director. But, on second thoughts, the Grand Duke, like Ritter at Manheim, seemed to fear the energy and talent of a

spirited young man at the head of an opera, which he himself was accustomed to direct. The project fell to the ground; and not perhaps to the great disappointment of Carl Maria, who could scarcely have entertained much pleasurable feeling in the expectation of a permanent residence in so uncongenial a town. His feeling in this respect he expressed in an article upon "Artistic Life in Darmstadt," published in the "Morgenblatt," in which the following passage occurs: "In spite of every encouragement on the part of a prince, so full of sincere love and zeal for musical art as is the Grand Duke, and his own excellent example, in Darmstadt there is little to be found of that true feeling for music, which makes the union of small circles for its study and exercise an indispensable necessity: music with the Darmstadters is only a sort of loyal duty, to be shown for the sake of earning favour with the sovereign."

The day for his departure at last arrived. He said farewell to his gray-headed and much-respected old master, Vogler, with deep emotion; whilst the old gentleman, on the other hand, with all his own feelings engaged upon the never-ending rehearsals of his "Samori," the words of which Carl Maria had been greatly improving at his desire, parted from his pupil with but little thought or care. Fortified with a mass of letters of introduction, which the Grand Ducal couple had lavishly showered on him, Carl Maria left Darmstadt on the 14th February, to begin that great artistic journey, which was intended to include no fewer cities of note than Munich, Prague,

Dresden, Berlin, Copenhagen, and Petersburg. He first took his way, however, over Frankfort to the little university of Giessen.

The young artist's first start was not made under the pleasantest auspices. "I have been grievously worried by the police," he wrote to Gottfried Weber. "When I went for permission to give my concert, I was treated and examined like a vagabond. But I let out in good style, utterly confounded them, and then went and got a permission from General Wittgenstein." The young artist, however, was always sure to find good fortune awaiting him among the student youth of a university. They already knew and loved his catching German melodies. His reception in Giessen was such, that, as yet all unused to fame, he was almost overpowered by it. After playing in a few private circles, his reputation as an eminent pianist spread like wildfire through the little town; never, perhaps, in his greatest time did he meet with more universal admiration than that which, all at once, now burst upon him. So great was the curiosity excited, so overpowering the crowd, which flocked around him, so startling the marks of homage and reverence lavished on him, that he began to grow weary of what he called his "undeserved honours." The very porters who carried his piano-forte to the concert-room and back, refused all remuneration after the performance. They were already repaid by the delight of hearing him, they said. The concert was one of the most brilliant Giessen had ever witnessed; and it put some 81 florins more into Carl Maria's purse.

It is characteristic of the young man's peculiar temperament, under these circumstances, that in spite of all entreaties to give another concert, he should have left Giessen on the 23d February, and started off for Aschaffenburg, principally for the sake of visiting the celebrated old musician, Franz Xaver Sterkel, who resided at that place, and was high in favour with the good Prince Bishop, and whose acquaintance Vogler had impressed strongly upon his pupil to make. This once famous composer appears to have been a singular old gentleman. "He received me in the most absurdly sentimental fashion," writes Weber in his diary, "and preached to me by the hour in the same tone." But in spite of this little off-hand remark, the young artist appears to have been singularly struck with the pathetic old gentleman; for he spins out the notice in his journal to a very unusual length, and gives the history of the old musician's life, as heard from his own mouth, in considerable detail. The story of a struggling artist's career was probably full of interest for one who had struggled himself, and who had still many a hard fight before him; and when he was told how, as a boy, old Sterkel, in his birth-place, Wurzburg, had followed Vogler from church to church to hear him play the organ—had been rudely checked in all his musical aspirations by his father—had at last obtained a few stealthy and scanty lessons from the Abbé, who was flattered by the boy's admiration—had with many a misgiving written six sonatas, which, taken by a friend to Paris, were there sold for fifty Louis-

d'or—and had heard from Vogler, on playing his sonatas, the proud words, "My boy, had I your flow of melody, and you my science, we were both great men,"—no doubt the young artist felt his heart warm towards the old man, whose difficult career had been achieved, and was greatly impressed by him, whatever his singularities.

Thence on to Wurzburg to visit Joseph Fröhlich, one of the greatest musical professors of his time, whose energy had made of that university a thoroughly national school of music, by the establishment of the then famous "Harmonie-Musik-Verein." By this good and noble-hearted man Carl Maria was received with every mark of kindness and even with affection. But his hope of giving a concert before the Archduke Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and brother of the Emperor of Austria, who, at that period, held his court at Wurzburg, and whose influence might have been of great advantage to the young composer, was completely crushed. In spite of the powerful support given to him by many persons of note about the palace, who even desired to see the young artist permanently attached, the intrigues of the Grand Ducal Capellmeister Grisi, "a humbugging *canaille* of an Italian," as Carl Maria wrote, who had a dread of any spirited young interloper, carried the day against the struggling artist's hopeful project. These littlenesses, combined with the incessant annoyances they produced, were very wearying to the straightforward enthusiastic nature of the young man. "I am often obliged," he wrote from Bamberg to

Gänsbacher, "to call all my reason to my aid, in order not to lose my temper and throw all up. There is nothing more miserable than this running about among strange people, strumming to them continually, and feeling that not one in thirty takes the slightest real interest." The scores of "Sylvana" and "Abu Hassan" were accepted, however, by the Grand Duke, and of course Grand-ducally remunerated. Wurzburg had thus no great attraction for the young man—at least in an artistic point of view: and yet he lingered on there many days longer than he intended. If the truth must be told, a charming little adventure, begun at a masked ball, and gradually unravelled under romantic complications on the following days, had laid hold on the susceptible young artist's heart, and kept him on the spot.

It was not until the end of March that Carl Maria tore himself away, and pursued his wandering course to Bamberg. The theatre at that town, under the direction of the talented Franz von Holbein, the well-known poet and dramatic author, and at the same time actor, was then enjoying a celebrity, which was destined to be shortlived, however. Holbein, in a very few months, by his profound practical knowledge, as well as his fine artistic taste, had raised the establishment, spite of the scanty means at his command, to one of the very best theatres in Germany; giving thereby another proof of the rich fruits, which any institute, whatever its nature, may be made to bear, when in the hands of a man of tact and feeling combined. With Holbein, Carl Maria had been

already acquainted in Frankfort; and the young man had thus the best opportunities of appreciating the rare qualities of Madame Renner, the principal actress. In her he found striking resemblances, in style and manner, both to his former heart's queen, Gretchen Lang, and to his seductive little "Sylvana," Caroline Brandt. The past, and the yet unknown future, both seemed to stir his soul to admiration of Madame Renner's talent.

With two personages also, who were destined to play a more or less important part in his future career, Carl Maria made a fleeting acquaintance at Bamberg. He sat one evening in the "Rose," sipping his cool Franconian wine, when he fell into conversation with two men, seated at a neighbouring table. The one was a somewhat savage-looking individual, a certain Hoffman, then musical director, and, at the same time, scene-painter at the theatre under Holbein's management. Young Weber did not then foresee that this strange personage was thereafter to become one of Germany's most celebrated authors; that his "Phantasie-Stücke nach Callot's Manier," would soon fly through the whole land like wild-fire; that the name of Hoffman would soon be spread far and wide throughout the civilised world: but the young fellow was, then and there, dazzled and enchanted with the diabolical flashes of lighting-wit, which sparkled in unceasing coruscation from the mouth of his singular but genial companion. When both, in later years, came together on the same field of wild romance, although by different

paths, a nearer intimacy, almost friendship, as far as their widely contrasting characters would allow, was formed between the two artistic natures, and worked influentially on the tendencies of their reciprocal careers. The other individual was of very different nature—a fair, slim, weakly-looking youth. His name was Bader; and he was then rising into notice as tenor at the Bamberg theatre. Weber knew not then that he saw before him the man, who, eleven years later, was to embody his own character of Max in "Der Freischütz," with unsurpassable life, spirit, and grace.

On the journey over Erlangen to Nuremberg fortune threw him once more in the way of the object of his charming little adventure at Wurzburg. All favoured the pleasant meeting. Never, perhaps, had spring dawned in Germany with such magic power as in the year 1811. In February every tree was green. It was like "Andalusia in April," wrote the happy young man. The fellow-travellers felt their hearts beat higher as they breathed the balmy air. In Nuremberg, however, the adventure was destined to end, as it had begun—at a masked ball. The fanciful young artist, dressed as a proud Cardinal, here presented his fair companion with a witty musical parody of the Gregorian Celibacy Bull, the hidden meaning of which was at once appreciated: and here they parted gaily, if not perhaps without a spice of regret, at least without cause for repentance.

In Augsburg, Carl Maria visited his old musical publisher Gombart, and disposed of an Italian Can-

zonette, which he had composed at Bamberg, under the title of "Momento capriccioso," with a further promise of six as yet unwritten sonatas and other pieces. But Augsburg was not otherwise propitious in a financial sense. "Things look badly for me here," he wrote to Gottfried Weber. "Under such circumstances, my stay will probably be very brief. Whenever I find that nothing is to be done, the devil himself cannot hold me; money runs confoundedly quick through one's fingers, when sitting in hotels."

So, on the 14th March, Carl Maria arrived at Munich. This capital had always been intended as the first central point of his great artistic tour, whence he should be able to make flying excursions. In Munich, where from the days of Carl Theodor, every prince had fostered musical art with considerable fervour, he hoped to turn his talents to practical account, add a rich store to his already acquired treasures of science, and perhaps even have the joy of seeing one or other of his operas represented.

Munich, however, was not yet the celebrated city of modern times, in which a new era of German art has dawned. King Ludwig was not yet upon the throne of Bavaria. The man was still to come, who proved that the greatest destiny of a sovereign was not to lead armies to the field; that science and art can place a glorious crown upon a prince's brow; and that, at the head of a noble army of artists and men of science, the highest honour is to be gained on that weary field, where the king has to win his spurs with as much difficulty as the poorest peasant child,

who first takes brush or chisel in his hand. The sovereign was not yet there, who was to acknowledge the vocation of the middle classes to rise high in the advance of social cultivation—the sovereign who got rid of his guards to build museums, who reduced his army to increase the ranks of the intellectual warriors fighting for his own fame, who has won for himself a greater glory than that of the greatest heroes of all time—a glory unspotted with one single drop of blood. The days were yet to come when the names of Cornelius, Schnorr, Kaulbach, Hess, Schwanenthaler, Stiglmeier, Klenze, and the many other mighty ones of art, were to shed a brilliant halo over the name of Munich—when magnificent streets, churches, museums, palaces, and monuments were to cover the dreary wastes around.

Max Joseph, however, had already done much to obtain the name of Father of his People. He had economised the finances of the country, simplified the administration of affairs, brought in a new code of laws, made his system of government straightforward and clear to all, and, by his able policy, spite of all the troubles and misfortunes of the revolutionary and imperial wars, considerably strengthened the position of Bavaria, and extended its territory. Spite of the demoralisation usually attendant on times of strife, moreover, he had contrived to preserve the national character of his good Munichers in the path of honesty and truth, and thus to live in cheerfulness in the midst of a cheerful population.

It was a stout, honest, solid-minded people, fond

of life's enjoyments, loving to sit with sturdy legs under a table covered with good food, a good glass of beer in hand, singing a good song, and toying with pretty women, never caring to sneer at little sensuous excesses, or to carp at little follies with envy and malice. As may be surmised, the general tone of morality was somewhat lax in Munich. But the people was an excellent one in its way; far from being depraved or degenerated; simple in its habits, and ignorant of squandering prodigality. To be sure, it had no great liking for novelty, evinced no tendency for social progress. It clung to its old forms and fashions, to its own national costumes on the heads of its women, and, above all, to its old religious creed.

Among such a people it was not to be expected that art should spring up as a spontaneous plant. But it was not one to throw a blight upon those flowers of genius which were reared by its liberal sovereigns in its gardens. Indeed, its sturdy nature was far more likely to provide the solid wood, out of which true artists may be hewn, than all the over-fine, over-strained, over-critical, would-be "souls of thought" which North-German civilisation pretends to brighten into such exquisite polish. The artist might find it difficult to achieve fame in Munich; but it was easy for him to be beloved, were he but an honest fellow, who painted or chiselled or sang in right good German spirit.

Thus it was that, even before Ludwig's sun had begun to shine upon Bavaria, there was a certain

measure of artistic life in Munich; not amongst the people, but in an atmosphere apart and above it. Max Joseph, if no enthusiastic worshipper of art, liked and protected artists; and several artists of note were comfortably congregated in a city, where the store of pleasure was great, disagreeablenesses were few, envy and jealousy almost unknown. Painters of name and fame were in great number. The magnificent collections of pictures at Schleissheim and Lustheim had been admirably arranged under Männlich's superintendence; the old town walls had been removed, by special direction of the king, and new suburbs planned; a botanical garden had been laid out; and a new and magnificent theatre, which two years later was to be completed, was already planned.

But whilst painting, sculpture, and architecture were in active exercise and development, fostered as they were, too, by the talented Crown Prince, whose personal encouragement was of great and effective influence on the artists, music, as far as general devotion to the art was concerned, was visibly falling more and more, at this period, into a state of retrogression and decay. This decline was principally owing to the condition of society. A general stagnation of social intercourse was prevalent. This arose in great measure from the dearness of all colonial products, occasioned by the Continental blockade, which rendered hospitality burdensome. But, strange to say, the almost entire cessation of private parties, under these circumstances, proved of great advantage to the theatre. The members of the higher and middling classes had been so

long accustomed to look upon their evening's amusement as a necessity of daily life, that, in this general restriction of their social pleasures, they flocked to the theatre and concert-rooms so persistently, that a stranger, ignorant of the real state of affairs, might have fancied luxury to be at its height. Beyond the diplomatic circle, in which the Russian Minister, Prince Bariatinski, distinguished himself by his passion for music, there were but few houses where any attention was paid to musical art. Among these few, one of the most remarkable was that of Baron von Poissl, the composer, a pupil of Danzi, who, at this period, was engaged upon his opera "Ottaviano in Sicilia," and was afterwards appointed superintendent of the theatre. Social intercourse thus flourished chiefly in subscription societies, and in public places of amusement. Two of these societies, or clubs, the "Harmonie" and the "Museum," were of importance to musical artists on account of their occasional production of musical entertainments.

The former club possessed a charming garden for summer festivities; and here artists, who lived in Munich, or were passing through, were invited to perform, without constraint or ceremony, in the intervals of play, conversation, dancing, and supping, and were always sure of finding an audience composed of some of the most remarkable personages of the town. In the Museum music was cultivated in less unceremonious form. Concerts were frequently given there, under the able direction of Fränzel, at which works of pretention and importance were pro-

duced. It was the accepted fashion also of Munich society of all grades to mix together in the beautiful and conveniently situated "English Garden," not long before laid out with exquisite taste by the well-known Count Rumford. Parties of the court and aristocratic circles, moreover, were continually being formed for pleasant little unpretending re-unions in the public, it might be said "pot-house," gardens of Bogenhausen, Thalkirchen, Swabingen, and Hesselhohe: whilst the lake of Starenberg, with its beautiful environs, offered occasions for picnic excursions into a region of the loveliest mountain scenery. The "Black Eagle" in the town was the general place of evening resort, where the little world of artists and professors met to moisten their weary throats with excellent Bavarian beer.

The theatre, which, towards the end of the eighteenth century, had fallen into a complete slough of artistic impotence, through the mismanagement and carelessness of its superintendent, old Count Seeau, had been saved from utter degradation by the appointment of Babo, the dramatic poet, and author of "Otto von Wittelsbach" and "Die Stralitzen," to the management. It was entirely owing to the high talents and excellent character of this remarkable man, who was materially assisted, at the same time, by the athletic, highly-respected, admirable declaimer, Max Heigel, that the theatre was raised once more to its due position as an institute of art. But even Babo had found himself unable to struggle against the fatal tendencies of the Court superin-

tendent, Count Törring-Seefeld, who cared only for pomp and splendour, and dazzling Italian opera. So, at the beginning of 1811, he had sent in his resignation; and a directing theatre committee had been appointed in his place. At the same time, however, a reaction in favour of natural delineation of character *versus* the overstrained sentimental bombast of the popular spectacular pieces of the day had been produced in the public mind, by the excellent performances of the French company, which had followed in the train of the Prince d'Eckmühl, and had, for some time, played in Munich. Moreover, the King had given evidence of his own desire for the better interests of his theatre, by his express orders, that, in the new house, boxes should be especially appointed for the clergy, the professors, and the artists.

The principal musical director was still Peter Winter, the celebrated composer of "The Interrupted Sacrifice." As a conductor he had many excellent qualities, although deficient in delicacy of ear, precision, and fire: but he had not the spirit to stand up against the false taste and superficial views of the foppish Count Seefeld. Winter was little-minded, envious, and crochetty. His strange personality has been drawn by the composer Louis Spohr, in his autobiography, by a few characteristic traits, which are worthy of quotation. "I was frequently with Winter, and was excessively diverted with his singular character, so full of the strangest contradictions. He was of colossal build, with the strength of a giant; and yet he was as timid as a hare. Al-

though accustomed to burst into intemperate fits of passion on the slightest occasion, he allowed himself to be led like a child. His cunning old housekeeper, consequently, tyrannised over him frightfully. Thus, for instance, when she happened to catch him dressing up his little dolls for a Christmas-tide manger—an occupation which was his especial delight, and on which he was wont to spend hours—she would fly at him, drag him from his work, and angrily rate him with an 'Are you to be for ever at play? Go to your piano at once, and finish your air, sir!'"

The Munich orchestra, under Winter's conductorship, was wholly worthy of the great master, but, like its chief, stiff, unbending, and repelling. It was rich in admirable instrumentalists, many of whom were in a position to figure as first-rate solo concert-players. When at its full complement it amounted to as many as eighty-seven performers. No less able to cope with every requirement was the operatic troop, which consisted of excellent artists, all of whom, being employed in singing Italian as well as German operas, had plenty of opportunities of mastering the advantages of both schools.

It was under such social and artistic auspices that Carl Maria von Weber now returned to Munich, furnished not only with letters of introduction from the grand ducal couple at Darmstadt to the Queen of Bavaria, but to other persons of distinction and note, among whom the then all-powerful minister, Count Montgelas, and the director of public works, Wieberking, were the most conspicuous. By the minister Carl

Maria was most kindly received, and so well served, that five days after his arrival—a wonderfully brief space for the workings of court etiquette—he was permitted an audience of the Queen. She conversed with him for a long time, in the most amiable and friendly manner, promised him, in the King's name, permission to give concerts in the town, and expressed the desire to hear him herself; begging, at the same time, as a favour, that she might be the first thus favoured. In the house of Wieberking he found a home. The good man, who was a very original character, and not without a certain amount of mountebank quackery in his profession as architect, was just then employed in building the great bridge over the Isar, after a new system of construction of his own. Carl Maria, always tickled by originality, warmed to the man, and by degrees, when he came to give lessons to his daughter Fanny, who had an admirable talent for the piano, combined with the true feeling of an artist, was a constant inmate in his house. His modest apartment in the Neuhäuser Gasse the young composer soon began only to use for sleep or pressing work.

In Wieberking's house Carl Maria made acquaintance with the celebrated clarionette player Bärmann. The masterly execution of this artist delighted the youth at once; and, after a very short study of his style, he composed for him the Concertino for Clarionette, marked as "Op. 26," afterwards so frequently played. But Bärmann's bright genial character and sterling worth soon won young Weber's

heart. Carl Maria, always ready with his sympathies, attached himself in the warmest friendship to this excellent fellow — a friendship which lasted through their lifetimes. In their communion as artists, or in long years of separation, never was this friendship weakened. With much similarity of character, no two men could have been more dissimilar in personal appearance; Weber thin, pale, weakly; Bärmann tall, athletic, with a magnificently handsome head. Carl Maria would laughingly say of the personal advantages of his friend, "All the choicest tit-bits in life are presented to that handsome fellow on a silver platter; poor devils like me must beg for the crumbs which fall from his magnificence's table."

The brilliant saloons of Prince Bariatinski were soon also opened to the talented young composer. Carl Maria was accustomed to take great delectation in the etiquette of old courtly manners and courtly gallantry, the last remnants of which still lingered in the house of the polite Russian minister. But there, too, came together all that was choicest in learning and in art; and there Carl Maria first found himself in presence of the celebrated philosopher Schelling. The youth had studied his works with care, and reverenced him with unusual awe. He gazed upon him now with strangely bewildering feelings. "To look upon this really great man," he said, in his letters, "was like a dream to me at first." With joyful simplicity he wrote, at a later date, "Schelling and I are such good friends!"

Whilst gathering good-will and affection on every

side, it was with Winter alone that Weber could not succeed in establishing any friendly relations. The old Capellmeister persisted in keeping the rising artist at a distance from him, with marked repulsiveness and almost unmannerly rudeness. Like others before him, no doubt he felt and feared the detrimental influence of the budding genius by his side. In spite of a first prejudice, which seemed to have been instilled into them, the members of the orchestra, who were thrust into the society of the jovial and amiable young artist at the "Black Eagle," the "Museum," or the "Harmonie," soon learned to appreciate him as an artist, to love him as a man. "The members of the orchestra," wrote Carl Maria to Gottfried Weber, "are mighty grand fellows, and as arrogant as you please; but they have taken into their heads to pet me amazingly. That envious old Winter has been uncommonly diverting. When I first paid him a visit, he took me for a dilettante, and overpowered me with politeness; but when, after a day or two, he discovered how matters stood, he was so abominably rude that all the musicians called him a beast. How can a man, who has already earned his laurels, so tarnish them, by letting himself down in this manner?" In spite of Winter, however, the newly-acquired friendship of the entire orchestra, joined to the influential exertions of his patrons, smoothed the way to the young composer, with unusual expedition, for a concert. Carl Maria's malignant "star" seemed to have withdrawn its blighting rays for the time; and all went well.

The concert took place on the 8th of April in the court theatre. The youth was now already known and talked of; and general curiosity was thus excited. The court party had taken fifty tickets; the affluence was great. The young composer was supported by excellent artists. His own symphony, unsteadily played excepting in the allegro, excited no great enthusiasm. Nor did his "First Tone," the words of which were but moderately declaimed by Kürzinger, the actor, on this occasion, meet with that general applause which greeted it on every other. But the trump-cards of the evening were destined to be played by himself and Bärmann, and to win the game triumphantly. Weber's piano concerto, played by himself, was eminently successful; and the new clarionette concertino, played with marvellous charm, drew down enthusiastic applause, and so delighted the King that immediately after the concert he gave an order to Carl Maria for two more similar compositions for the same instrument. The semi-failure of his "First Tone" Weber took greatly to heart, the more so as he had counted on the immense effect of the declamation of his newly-acquired friend Heigel, the talented actor and dramatic author. Incipient illness prevented his appearance; that illness terminated shortly afterwards in his death. The concert, however, brought Weber the sum of 448 florins, and did even more for him by establishing his fame as composer and pianist in Munich.

The young man was soon busily employed. He worked with zeal upon the clarionette pieces de-

manded by the King—composed four songs, at the request of Director Fränzel, for a revival of Kotzebue's "Poor Minnesinger" at the theatre, where, on their production, two of them were rapturously redemanded, although now forgotten most unjustly by the world—and continued his literary labours by an article in the "Morgenblatt," upon an emendation in the construction of the flute. On every side he was in request. "The whole orchestra seems possessed by the devil," he wrote to Gottfried Weber; "every man of them wants me to compose a concert piece for his especial instrument. You see that I have tolerably hard work on hand; and, consequently, I shall probably remain here the whole summer. My earnings are pretty considerable; and another concert, given before my departure, will doubtless prove remunerative. There seems a very general feeling here that I ought to receive the appointment of Capellmeister; but you know what my feelings on that subject are. At all events, I have some hopes that my operas may be given here."

The hopes thus faintly expressed were destined to find realisation much sooner than the young composer expected. Some unknown influence had evidently been brought to bear upon Winter. From gross rudeness to young Weber, he, all at once, and at one bound, went over into the most overpowering friendliness and politeness. From the great director himself Carl Maria suddenly received the intelligence that his "Abu Hassan" was to be put into immediate rehearsal.

Under these sunnier influences friends, admirers, and well-wishers, were sure to spring up around him, with all the expedition and fecundity of mushrooms. The mothers of hopeful daughters began to spend pleasant looks upon him; music-loving ladies found it worth their while to throw out seductive lures at the pleasant, genial young artist; whilst the rehearsals of his "Abu Hassan" brought him into immediate connexion with the theatrical company, the young female members of which did not see why they should not try for the chance of becoming a Mistress Capellmeister *in futuro*. The inflammable young artist, whose genius needed the fostering warmth of love to soar aloft, was soon surrounded by all sorts of seductions. Two charming singers were pulling caps for him, and employing every trick of coquetry to win his heart; two other adoring beauties in society advanced their own individual claims at the same time. And Carl Maria, fluttering from one to the other, seemed to dream that he might be four men at once, each of whom had a right to love a separate object of adoration. Pleasant hours were those thus passed, but full of pain, trouble, torture in the future. There can be no doubt that the existence of the struggling young artist, which had known so much privation and so much sorrow, was thus gilded by the pleasantest golden dreams, and that the transient brilliancy of such a period gave fresh elasticity and powers of productiveness to his genius. Munich was never strict on the score of morality; and there were few who would have cavilled at his butterfly

life whilst he was sipping sweets at so many beautiful blossoms, and flying on eager wing, now with one of his equally butterfly singers, now with another, to attractive spots in the immediate neighbourhood. But the bloom was soon swept away from the painted wings of pleasure. Often in his diary were now to be found the words, "All women are alike worthless." Interlined even among the columns of his desultory account-book may be found notices scratched down, such as, "A— coquets with me, though she knows I am making love to her friend." "B— abuses M—, tells me horrid stories of her, and says I must not go home with her." "All are bad alike." And ever and anon come back the letters "A. W. T. N.," which stand for "Alle Weiber taugen nichts."

In all these love-toyings and coquetries, however, Carl Maria did not now lose the sense of the advantages to be gained in the intercourse with more reputable and less dangerous society. In many houses of distinction he was received with friendship as well as regard, and found a worthier sphere for artistic inspiration. Nor did his pleasures close his mind to the dictates of true artistic interests. During one of his many holiday excursions to Nymphenburg, he insisted, spite the evident annoyance of his fair companion of the day, in visiting the talented acoustic mechanician Kaufmann, who had invented a new instrument which he termed an "Harmonichord," and which had been produced at court. Weber was delighted with the depth of expression and feeling elicited by this invention, and in turn so enchanted

the inventor's son, young Kaufmann, with his extempore fantasies upon the harmonichord, that the young man would not let him go without a promise to compose a brilliant piece with orchestral accompaniment to give full advantage to the instrument. Carl Maria seized eagerly on the idea; the rich and expressive tones of the instrument inspired him. Under the influence of this excitement, and fearing lest the impression might fade, he persisted, in spite of the expostulations and to the disgust of his lovely companion, on working out a fresh idea all the way home; nor would he retire to rest, weary as he was, until he had noted down the theme of his new inspiration, with all the instrumental parts. The task, however, was a hard one. "I must call all my liveliest fancy to my aid," he wrote to Gänsbacher, "to write for an instrument, the tone of which is so singular and strange, so as to set it forth to advantage along with other well-known instruments." The composition, however, was full of melody and charm, and was afterwards always used by Kaufmann on his tours as his great piece for effect.

Meanwhile the rehearsals of "Abu Hassan" had progressed. The orchestra was full of zeal for the young composer, and played the light easy music with brilliancy and fire. The first representation took place on the 10th of June. Alas! the imp of evil, which Carl Maria persisted in calling his "star," after having forgotten to play him an ill turn on the occasion of his concert, seemed resolved to pay the young composer off with interest on this far more

important occasion, as though he had been taken to task by his superior demon for his previous neglect. The house was crammed. The overture had been rapturously applauded. The charming and spirited duett between Hassan and Fatima had commenced, when suddenly burst forth a cry of "fire!" The audience crowded shrieking from the house. The curtain fell; all was disorder. It was found to be a false alarm. But it was long before quiet could be restored; and the general feeling for appreciation of the greatest musical beauties was gone for the night. The little opera, however, was charmingly sung and played; an admirable precision and a sparkling freshness distinguished the efforts of all alike. In spite of the disastrous drawback to the pleasure of the evening, many of the pieces were applauded to the full heart's content of the young composer; and the general expression of feeling was all the vainest could have desired. Thus encouraged, his artist zeal longed to be at work again upon operatic composition. "I am yearning fearfully for an opera-book," he wrote to Gänsbacher. "Without an opera in hand, I am a miserable man!" Yet, strange to say, for ten long years his yearning remained unsatisfied—for ten years, when the first dramatic creation of Weber's genius after his pretty little opera of "Abu Hassan" was destined to be the greatest of all his works, "Der Freischütz."

It may here be mentioned that "Abu Hassan" was produced about the same period in Würtemberg, at Ludwigsburg in the month of May, at Stuttgart

in July. But in the relations in which the young composer stood towards the court, it was deemed advisable to suppress his name. "Can you fancy a more wretched stupid piece of time-serving and truckling?" wrote Carl Maria to Gottfried Weber; "and to what purpose? Every newspaper will be sure to trumpet the truth." "In Stuttgart I hear Hassan did not please," he wrote at an after date. "All one! I won't say I am delighted; but I am not yet knocked down and trampled on."

While waiting for the much-desired, long-delayed opera-book, Carl Maria was never idle now. Songs were composed, among others one of exquisite sweetness, "Maienblümlein so schön," which to this day has survived the wreck of so many other beauties. Critical literary notices were written; such as a characteristic and interesting account of the Munich opera troop, and a detailed criticism of the boy Mayerbeer's oratorio of "God and Nature," which had been just given in Berlin—the latter a sacrifice of truth to friendship, it is be feared, as Carl Maria had never heard the work performed; and, what also had its due weight upon his future career, "golden opinions" were won from all around him. A notable instance of the respect and affection borne him was given at the rehearsal of a concert, at which Bärmann's clarionette concertino was to be repeated. So great was the effect produced by it, that the members of the orchestra burst into a tumult of applause. One alone dissented, and sulkily murmured the words, "a mere amateurish production." The others were so indig-

nant at this depreciatory remark that they determined to kick him out of the orchestra, and, but for the young composer's intervention, would have summarily put the threat into execution.

Warm friends the amiable young artist found in almost all who enjoyed the sunshine of his winning smile; and his heart, so easily accessible to friendly sympathy, was now, at the same period, to be struck by an unexpected grief, an equally unexpected joy. His new friend Max Heigel, the great actor, and the worthy man, died suddenly. His old friend and true mentor, Danzi, returned, almost simultaneously to Munich. For the funeral ceremony of Heigel, Weber composed, at the request of the family, a dirge, consisting chiefly of a bass solo and quartett, the greater portion of which has been lost. But, when all was ready, unexplained hindrances came in the way. Winter's Requiem was given instead; and Weber felt himself wounded to the quick. But all annoyance was speedily forgotten. Was not the good Danzi there, into whose heart he could pour all his sorrows and all his joys? The presence of the man, who, spite the difference in years, sympathised with him so closely, who loved him for all his virtues, and would so gladly have excused all his follies, shed one unremitting sunshine upon Carl Maria's life, during his stay in Munich. With him, and Herr von Poissl, Danzi's former pupil, Weber gave himself up to the true charms of artistic life. Nature and freedom were enjoyed on lake or mountain side: bowls, pistol-shooting, riding, and sailing parties were the amuse-

ments of the hour: art was studied in the theatre, or in its joint exercise between the three. One of the old Manheim games, "Composition for a wager," was resumed at Wieberking's house, where, on one occasion, a canzonette was given the three composers by the pretty daughter on the words, "Son troppo innocente nell' arte d' amar," and the victory won by Danzi by two bars. Again Carl Maria found heart to write to Danzi on special occasions those humorous letters in verse, which speak so characteristically of his cleverness, as well as his joviality. But even in this pleasant intercourse, other dear friends were not forgotten. About the same period he wrote, in the fulness of his affectionate heart, to Gottfried Weber: "Am I content, you ask? I suppose every man ought to be, who has not precisely a knife at his throat. But I have found no soul to which to cling like yours—no hours such as *we* have passed together —none of that exuberance of heart's joy, which makes me take guitar in hand, and sing spite of myself."

Meanwhile Carl Maria had not been forgotten by his old Manheim friend. Gottfried Weber had received a commission to find an able Capellmeister for Wiesbaden, and had at once written off to Munich, full of joy, to propose the appointment to the young composer, whom he would have so gladly enchained in his immediate neighbourhood. A lengthy correspondence ensued between the two. But the Wiesbaden theatre, although projected, was not yet built. Neither the proposed arrangements or salary could be made to appear advantageous to Carl Maria: and,

spite of his own earnest desire to be near his dearest friends, he rejected the offer, and relinquished the new idea, not without some natural feelings of regret.

Summer was by this time far advanced. Carl Maria was now only occupied with critical notices, the principal of which were upon Dalayrac's "Macdonald," Mehul's "Joseph," and Bernhard Weber's "Deodata." The last of these composers Weber, for some unknown reason, cordially detested, with an antipathy afterwards to be so bitterly returned to his own cost. Carl Maria's long-projected "art and nature pot-house journey," as he called it, to Switzerland lay before him. One of his chief reasons for taking this tour was his desire to study the system of Pestalozzi in musical instruction. Both King and Queen had so fully evinced their high contentment at his Munich performances, that he was able to start off with well-lined purse. On the 9th of August, he departed from Munich, full of energy and hope.

CHAPTER XI.

WANDERINGS.

CARL MARIA'S journey to Switzerland began under the most unpleasant auspices. His direct way to the lake of Constance, whither he was first bound, lay across a little corner of the Würtemberg territory. Perhaps the ban, which hung over him in the forbidden kingdom, never once entered the careless young fellow's mind: perhaps, if he really did think, he concluded that he could slip by unregarded on an obscure frontier. At all events, he arrived at Ravensberg, the pretty little border town, without a thought of evil. He had given up his passport, had received it back, and had stepped into his conveyance with light heart, when suddenly the principal frontier-overseer of the district, a Stuttgarter, of the name of Romig, stepped up to the carriage, looked at him sharply, re-demanded his passport, and abruptly announced to him that he was "in arrest." So Carl Maria was bundled out of the carriage without ceremony, conveyed into the "Lamb," the only little inn of the place, and safely bestowed in a room, where he was told he was to remain under the strict guard of a gendarme.

Terror seized upon the poor young man. He well knew the ruthless sovereign with whom he had to deal. Spectral visions, in which he fancied himself dragged as a criminal to Stuttgart, and then buried alive in a fortress prison, flitted before his eyes, as he sat alone brooding in his chamber. Whilst an estafette was despatched to the capital to learn what measures should be taken with the arrested youth, he lay sick and helpless, shivering with fever. Fortunately the postmaster, by name Paur, took pity on him, and brought him a medical man. As it happened also, two young officers, who had known Carl Maria, and cracked many a good bottle of wine with him, in Stuttgart, were then quartered in Ravensberg. They heard of his arrest, came to visit him, and obtained permission for him to play billiards with them, and otherwise kill time and heavy thought. Carl Maria's recovery from his attack of fever was slow, however. Five days were passed in anxiety. At last a carrier arrived bringing back the passport, and an order that the delinquent should be passed on immediately to the next frontier. All his friends at Munich, he afterwards learned, had credited the report that his destiny had been the fortress of Hohenasberg. But Friedrich of Würtemberg could not let any cause for anger pass without a victim. His rage fell upon the compassionate postmaster. The unfortunate man received, by the same courier, the intimation that he was dismissed for ever from the royal service.

Carl Maria, still suffering from fever and weakness, was thrust into a carriage, and, with a gen-

darme by his side, conveyed to Mörsburg on the lake of Constance. Fortunately, this was the very direction in which he was intending to travel. Without being allowed a moment's rest, he was placed in a boat bound for Constance. At that town he was at last at liberty; and he bent his first free steps to the lovely domain of the Baron Hoggner, who had been one of his many kind friends during the Munich season, and had frequently invited him to this place. There he hoped to recover his health and spirits. Schloss Wolfsberg was beautifully situated on the borders of the lake, at a short distance from Constance, commanding views of great magnificence, and enjoying the purest air. Carl Maria was received with open arms by the amiable master. With good tending and nursing, aided by the elasticity of youth, he was enabled to shake off at last the weight of fever and prostration, which his terrible anxiety of mind had generated. Some happy days were passed, during this recovery, in the fullest enjoyment of nature's beauties, and in the bosom of a charming family. On his departure he gave his good friends, as a reminiscence of those days, a canzonette composed, during his stay, to the words, "D' ogni amator' la fede è sempre mal sicura." And now, full of life and hope once more, revelling in the rich charms of nature around him, Carl Maria took open boat down the Rhine for Schaffhausen, singing with renewed artistic spirit as he went. But strange are the ways of Genius! Who could have supposed that German Weber, floating down the German

Rhine, under the influence of the magnificent scenery of German Switzerland, should have found his fancy occupied with little Italian canzonettes? One of these, "Chi mai vi possa lasciar d' amare," he noted down, as he lay, upon the benches of the boat.

Two purposes directed Carl Maria to Schaffhausen. The one was, to visit the famous fall of the Rhine; the other, to be present at a general gathering of the "Helvetian Musical Society," which was there taking place. He was happy in the achievement of both. He approached the fall with an anxious fear lest this wonder of nature might sink far below the pictures of his own imagination: he found, to his delight, it far exceeded them. At the meeting of the "Helvetian Musical Society" he came across the man whose acquaintance he most desired to make in Switzerland, and whose good opinion he most longed to win. This was Nägeli of Zurich, one of the principal founders of the Society, at once an admirable musician and a pleasant composer, as well as bookseller. Weber had long known this excellent man's "Instruction in the Art of Singing," on the system of Pestalozzi, and had long honoured his unremitting efforts to establish music as one of the principal elements in the formation of national character. Nägeli, on the other hand, had heard Weber's "Sylvana" in Frankfurt, and possessed the highest opinion of the young composer's talent. He received the young man with a mixture of cordiality and reverence, and immediately offered to have him made an honorary member of the "Helvetian Musical Society"

at the first meeting of the body. The election took place with acclamation.

Schaffhausen was crowded, on the occasion of this gathering, with musicians, singers, and lovers of music from every part of Switzerland. The concerts were held in the fine old cathedral church, or, in the open air, in the lovely public gardens stretching along the banks of the Rhine. The weather was propitious. Every where might be seen the ardent young Weber, at the concerts, in the midst of the joyous singers of a people proud of their freedom, whose "genuine republic spirit and unity of feeling," as Carl Maria himself wrote, "was so interesting" to him, in the gardens on heavenly evenings, when the mountains were still glowing with the brilliant colours of the setting sun, and perfumed breezes floated down from their hollows, by music and song, by public fireworks and balls in the guildhall, in every place, on every occasion, when he could feel his heart beat with joy again, and chase from his mind the lingering mists of that terrible arrest at Ravensberg. This joyous feeling was to be crowned with a fresh joy. At one of the concerts, suddenly and unexpectedly there rose before him, like a vision, the form of his dear young friend Mayerbeer. The young musician was on his way to Italy with his parents, and had halted at Schaffhausen to take part in the great musical celebration. This meeting was not only one of pleasure: it was destined to be of considerable importance in Carl Maria's after life. He now first made the acquaintance of Mayerbeer's

excellent parents, whose affection he won, as was his wont, at their first meeting, by the charm of his bright amiable manners and his witty discourse. A friendship was then and there formed, which was afterwards to be an ark of refuge to him in the stormy whirlpool of his life at Berlin. Delighted as Carl Maria was at this meeting with Mayerbeer, he found reason, however, to complain of his cool North German friend. "I was not at all pleased with the little Bear," he wrote to Gottfried Weber. "Of course I could have no talk with him at the concert; and, as he was lodged outside the town-gates, which closed at 9, he soon scrambled away. He promised to be with me by 6 the next morning—Serviteur!—At last came a note to say he would be with me by 11. The same thing over again! But you know Master Bear's habits on such occasions. I never saw him until the concert in the evening. The next day, which was his birth-day, I breakfasted with his parents. But what chance of any confidential interchange of feeling then? . . . His parents are charming people; his mother especially delighted me."

At the conclusion of the musical festivities Carl Maria started off, in company with the Beers, for Winterthur, where he had been advised to give a concert. Provided, as he was, with plentiful letters of introduction, he expected all to go "like clock-work." But on his arrival he soon found the giving of the concert no such easy matter. The orchestra, formed of amateurs, he discovered, on first hearing,

to be wholly incapable of accompanying his great piano concerto. He passed a whole day and night in reducing the instrumental score to a quartett. "The work was the very devil!" he wrote afterwards. Next, no decent piano was to be found in all the town. Second despair! The concert, however, took place; but with so little remunerative results, that, had he not been the guest of a gentleman in the town, the expenses of the ill-advised excursion would not have been covered. So Weber, in a rather discontented frame of mind, passed on to Zurich.

His object was naturally to give a second concert here. But another purpose was also uppermost in his mind. One of the great desires of his "Harmonic Society" was to establish a musical paper of its own. But the difficulty had been to find a publisher for an enterprise, the profits of which were far from clear. In his new acquaintance Nägeli, Weber hoped to have discovered the desired man. But, on his arrival at Zurich, he found the good bookseller little disposed to forward his views. Nägeli very pathetically pointed to his account-books to prove how disastrous to his trade had been all his connexion with musical literature. But the publisher smiled more hopefully upon another idea, which now flashed across Carl Maria's active brain. While conversing on literary topics he had conceived the plan of writing a "Handbook for Wandering Musical Artists," which was to contain every possible information for the guidance of musicians on artistic tours. Inspired with this plan, and encour-

aged by the publisher, the eager young man set to work at once to write his book; and with such incessant zeal did his pen flow, that the necessary arrangements for his concert were more than half-neglected. The work, however, so sedulously begun was necessarily laid aside in the pressure of business of a more purely artistic nature, and was never completed—unfortunately, it may be said; for such a book, as conceived by Weber, might have been as useful in a practical point of view, as it would have been of importance in the history of musical art.

Fortunately for Carl Maria, Nägeli and his friends were busy in the arrangements of the concert, which the young man himself, in his hot literary zeal, had nigh forgotten. His reputation had preceded him from Schaffhausen; his allies had sung his praises; and the concert was crowded. Every expectation was more than realised. The applause throughout his play was so enthusiastic that the young artist was almost overcome. But in writing of this concert Weber expressed, more than any thing, his own delight at playing, for the first time, on a piano by Erard.

With better satisfaction in his heart now, Carl Maria determined on immediately putting into execution a long-projected excursion into the Oberland on foot. In this purpose he was all the more encouraged as he found a new Zurich acquaintance, Siste, an accomplished musician and excellent man, bent upon the same plan of travel. The young man had some mistrust as to the powers of endurance of his own legs; and there is no doubt that this mis-

trust was only too well founded. But he had unusual pride in undertaking the experiment; and, with a light knapsack on each back, the two musicians wended their way out of the gates of Zurich.

Before leaving Zurich, however, Weber took occasion to visit Nägeli's celebrated Singing Institute. But here he was evidently much disappointed, although the study of the Pestalozzi system had been one of the objects of his journey. "It was altogether a curious affair," he wrote to Gottfried Weber; "the fellows sang well—but how? Just like people in a Lutheran church. The compositions I could in no wise make up my mind to; they appeared to me so dreadfully commonplace and vulgar! Perhaps, however, I could not understand them. I suppose it is national singing."

It is scarcely necessary to follow the young tourist with his companion on a journey, which had no influence on his musical development or his artistic career, through all the well-known valleys, passes, mountains, and lakes of that magnificent region, the Oberland of Berne. That the ardent imagination of the young composer was vividly impressed, there can be no doubt. No one was led away more enthusiastically by the charms of nature than himself; but his fine healthy temperament was as equally devoid of all mere sentimentality. Beyond a few glowing descriptions of the avalanches, which thundered on his way, and the deep blue-clefted glaciers, with flowers on their brink, all the entries in his day-book of the marvellous sights he witnessed, are but

brief and scanty. Far more frequent are the expressions, "Tired as a dog!" "Slept like a top after all my fatigues!"—"A man should not attempt to describe these wonders," he notes in his diary; and in a letter to his friend Dusch he again writes, "I am to describe scenery—am I? Such an attempt would drive me fully mad. No! I can feel in God's free nature; but speak of it I cannot." Curious also, as bearing upon the same feeling, is an extract from a long letter, respecting his excursion, to his friend Gottfried Weber. "I have been reading over my scribble," he writes; "a curious idea has just struck me. Suppose it should be Heaven's will that we should be celebrated men one of these days. Why! when we are dead, people may choose to collect our letters; and what an abominable trick it would be, if this wretched letter of mine were ever to be printed!"

It had been Carl Maria's hope to have extended his journey to Geneva and its lake. But his purse began to get low; and, with many a sigh, this intention was necessarily renounced. He turned back on his way, and proceeded to prosecute his more immediately artistic journey northwards, in order to strengthen his weakened finances by giving fresh concerts. Berne offering no hopes of a pecuniary success, he found his way to Soluthurn, where the foreign diplomatic corps was then accustomed to reside, as possibly more propitious to his hopes. At Soluthurn he was taken by some friends to visit the Bavarian Minister, Herr d'Ollory, who had a delightful residence in the neighbourhood. "I was most

charmingly received here," he noted in his diary, "and compelled to remain.... What good it does one to enjoy once more the companionship of good, honest, straightforward people, who have the interests of art so warmly at heart!" But in Soluthurn Carl Maria was again doomed to disappointment. He soon found that all chances of a concert there were vain. Under these circumstances he accepted an invitation from the amiable Bavarian Minister to spend some days at his lovely place at Jegisdorf.

It is a remarkable fact in Weber's life, that his most irresistible impulses to productiveness almost invariably came upon him at times when the impressions, bestowed by the world without and around him, might have been thought the most absorbing. Thus, in the house of Herr d'Ollory, surrounded by brilliant society, he isolated himself from the company, even to the point of giving offence, and lived an almost retired life in his own room. This time, stolen from lively social intercourse, was passed in continuous work. One of the chief productions of this visit was his brilliant scena and aria from "Athalie," which he composed for the beautiful Frau Peyermann, an admirable songstress, who was an inmate of the house. How far his feverish susceptibility to female charms may have influenced him, on this occasion, is not clear; but the air was followed by one of the most beautiful and freshest of all his songs: "Künstler's Liebesforderung"—"The Artist's Declaration of Love"—the words of which flowed, simultaneously with the music, from his own pen.

He says, in his diary, "I was possessed of the devil of poetasters: It was in vain to try to exorcise the imp. I was obliged to write verses, whether I would or not." The circumstance is suspicious; but, at the same time, it must be remarked, he worked hard on the minuet and allegro of a clarionette concerto, on which he was then engaged for business purposes. Nor, even if his heart was really touched, did he neglect other interests. During his stay at Jegisdorf he made an excursion to Aarau, for the purpose of visiting the celebrated author, Zschokke, whose acquaintance he not only hoped to make, but whose active coöperation he, as well as his fellow-labourers, had the greatest desire to obtain for their "Harmonic Society." These intentions and hopes were frustrated, however. On his arrival at Aarau, Weber had the mortification of learning that Zschokke was absent from home and on a journey. But time pressed; and Carl Maria had to part, with a heavy heart, from his good friends at Jegisdorf.

In Basle the young wandering artist had the expectation of at last finding a town in which he could give the concert, which the exigencies of his purse now began to force upon him more and more. For centuries past, Basle had been regarded as the central point for all intellectual and artistic life in Switzerland; and here, in truth, he found arms open to receive him—hands ready to assist him. The aristocratic, as well as the scientific and artistic circles of the town vied with each other in testifying their admiration and respect. Right pleasant days were

passed in private musical performances; and his concert was fixed for the 13th. November. Again, on this occasion, the little demon that presided over his "evil star" made a bold attempt to exercise its malignant influence. On the very morning of the concert, the news spread through the town that the Hereditary Grand Duchess Stephanie of Baden was about to arrive that very day at her country residence in the neighbourhood. All the world was agog to see and to greet this interesting and much-loved princess on her return. Carl Maria, although so well accustomed to these tricks of fate, was in despair. Fortunately, his better genius made a strong pull the other way. Few of his expected audience absented themselves. In every point of view the concert was successful; it gave him a clear profit of 130 florins. The expenses had been but trifling. The Concert Direction of the town of Basle had insisted on taking the principal outlay on itself, as "a mark of admiration and regard" for the talented young composer.

With the pleasantest feelings, induced by his short stay in Basle, Weber terminated his Swiss journey of three months. In many respects this excursion had been of signal advantage to him. It had spread his reputation in a portion of Europe isolated in many ways from the intellectual influences of more refined civilisation; it had procured him friends and acquaintances of distinction and worth; it had freshened him up in body and soul, and given him new confidence in his own powers.

It had done more. It had entirely dispossessed him of an opinion which he had long entertained, and frequently expressed, namely, that the development and cultivation of all art, and more especially of music, can only be generated in an atmosphere warmed by the genial sun of a prince devoted to its interests. He came from his intercourse with stout, honest, republican natures, whose hearts beat as warmly for musical art in its best form, as did those of the highest of the earth, cured, as he himself admitted, of the prejudice that the highest refinement of manners was indispensable for the acquirement of a true feeling for music. His experiences had not only thoroughly destroyed his cherished theories, but had given him lessons to be remembered in the future relations of his life.

Spite of all the advantages derived from his interesting journey, Carl Maria had not, as has been seen, enjoyed unremitting sunshine. One sorrow, wholly unconnected with his tour, had pressed heavily upon his heart. During his absence, the unlucky Franz Anton, who now remained permanently at Manheim, and whose intellect became continually weaker and more obscured, had done him a serious damage—a damage which might have proved irreparable—by mixing himself up in the most uncalled-for manner in his son's affairs, and addressing another fulsome letter, utterly devoid of tact, and teeming with untruths, but terminating, of course, with the signature of "Baron von Weber, Chamberlain," to Rochlitz, at Leipsic. Carl Maria's connection with the "Leipsiker Musik-

Zeitung" depended wholly upon his good understanding with the eminent critic. Upon the discovery of Franz Anton's miserable interference, he wrote to deprecate the ill-will of Rochlitz on the score of his father's age and weakness. No greater proof can be found of Carl Maria's goodness and delicacy of heart, as well as of his unceasing attachment to his wretched old father, than in the fact that immediately after his knowledge of this letter, which gave him the bitterest annoyance, he wrote from Berne to the old gentleman in a strain of the most simple childlike affection, without one single allusion of the remotest kind to the cause of his distress.

After another brief sojourn with his friend Baron Hoggner at Wolfsberg, Carl Maria returned, by the way of Lindau, back to Munich. Here a hundred little disagreeablenesses awaited him, all arising from the complications of his multifarious love-adventures. But, at the same time, he was greeted by the joyful intelligence that his good friend Bärmann, the great clarionette-player, had arranged so as to accompany him on his further artistic tour towards the north of Germany. Every anticipated cloud now disappeared from Carl Maria's mind; and a fresh golden halo was shed over every anticipated joy. His future journey was to be a mere "party of pleasure," as he wrote. But much was to be done before the friends could start; and Weber set himself to work with untired zeal and energy. Before putting in his petition for the promised letters of introduction from his royal patrons, he had to complete

his canzonettes, of which the Queen had accepted the dedication. One of the instrumental concert pieces commanded by the King was also still unwritten. Several literary critical notices were demanded at his hands. Moreover, a grand concert with Bärmann was to be given before his departure. His hands were full. But, under the vigorous grasp of the zealous and industrious artist, link after link fell from the chain which bound him to Munich. Three of his canzonettes for the Queen, "Mille volte, mio tesoro," "Va! ti consola, addio," and "Ninfe se liete," were polished off in as many days, and with those which he had composed on his journey, were presented to her majesty in a private audience. Weber, abashed at the facility with which he had completed his task, excused himself for having ventured to attach the royal name to such little trifles. "Hush! hush!" replied the Queen, laughing. "Nothing is little! nothing is great! But I well know that all which comes from your hands cannot be otherwise than beautiful."

Day and night the young composer sat at his labours, until all his work was ended. The concert was held on the 11th November, and was the most brilliant, perhaps, that Weber had ever given. The "cream" of the Munich society of the day was there, headed by the royal couple. All seemed animated by the desire to shower the highest honours on the head of the much-beloved and respected young artist, who was so soon to depart from among them. Weber's original overture to "Rubezahl,"

now wholly reconstructed by him, under the new title of "Ruler of the Spirits," was one of the features of the evening. Although not one of the most melodious of his beautiful overtures, the "Ruler of the Spirits" was one by which Weber laid great store. On this occasion it was admirably played, and commanded the loudest approbation. His new air from "Athalie," composed for Madame Peyermann, was sung by Regina Lang; and Carl Maria found himself inspired with even more than the usual fire of genius, when, on the favourite romance of Benjamin from Mehul's "Joseph" being given him by the Queen, as a theme for improvisation, he sat down to the piano on that night, and carried all hearts away. It was impossible for artist to bid farewell more overwhelmed with honour and glory, than did Weber in his adieu to Munich.

Fortune was here again shining upon the young composer. Beyond the troubles his own follies had brought upon his head, he had but one cloud upon his mind when he left the Bavarian capital. This cloud, which had gathered slowly and almost unobserved by Carl Maria himself at first, was a strange misunderstanding with Gottfried Weber. His Manheim friend seemed to have conceived the idea that Carl Maria exercised his influence, as director of the affairs of the secret "Harmonic Society," too greatly for his own interests and advantage. This misunderstanding was more than half a misconception, which a personal explanation might have cleared away. Letter after letter was written by Carl

Maria to his friend at this period, and for some months to come, in his usual bright, half-jesting, affectionate, cajoling style; but to vain purpose. The correspondence of the friends flagged sadly in spirit and warmth. And it was only under the vivifying sun of a happy meeting afterwards, that this cloud, which hung perpetually over Carl Maria's mind, could be wholly and for ever dispersed.

A good stout comfortable travelling-carriage for two had been bought; and never, perhaps, did two musicians set out on an art-pilgrimage with more hopeful and joyous spirits, than did Weber and Bärmann when, after shaking off the heavy burden of the hundred-and-one farewell visits, they drove forth on the 1st December into the cold winter air. By travelling day and night the two friends arrived at Prague on the 4th. Little did Carl Maria then know how important was to be the part which the Bohemian city would play in the drama of his life in the future. For the present all was joy, as he threw himself into the arms of his dear friend Gänsbacher, who was then residing in Prague, in the service of Count Carl Max Firmian. The good fellow had been apprised of Carl Maria's advent, and of his intention to give concerts in Prague; and he had paved the way so as to facilitate this design. But Gänsbacher was too jovial a soul not to desire to make a sojourn in Prague, in every possible way, delightful to the strangers who claimed its hospitality.

Prague was at that period a city combining

every possible advantage which Gänsbacher desired for his friend. Not only were the love and culture of music requirements of life in the eyes of the many men of talent and note with which the city was filled; but they reigned paramount in all the most brilliant families of the wealthy Bohemian capital.

For the first time, Weber found himself thrown into the circle of that Austrian aristocracy which had produced a long succession of men of truly noble feeling—men who had immortalised themselves as the greatest patrons of art, as well as by their services as generals and statesmen. The aristocracy at Prague, at this period, was one which formed a marked contrast with the so-called nobility of other parts of Germany, whose highest boast was to have intermarried with their equals ever since the Crusades, never to have been of the slightest service to their generation, and to have obstructed every effort made to take the rule of states out of the hands of high-born incapacity, and to bestow it in the better keeping of "non-born" intelligence. No nobility in the world had more distinguished itself in its relations to art, and especially as regards music, than had the knightly men and noble dames of the oldest Austrian races, then congregated in Prague; in none was there a more ardent, genuine, disinterested admiration for the beautiful and the good. The love of art was no mere fashion here. Fashion does not outlive generation after generation; fashion bestows no such sense of humility in the presence of genius as that exemplified by the intercourse of the Viennese nobility with

the bitter, morose, and uncourtly Beethoven; fashion does not bestow the capacity for understanding what is really great in art. From days, already ancient in history, never had a great name shone as a bright star in the firmament of art, that it had not been coupled with another, bright also with the lustre of its own noble radiance; and together they had risen to fame in the annals of posterity.

To two representatives of such noble names, rendered glorious in the history of music, Prince George Lobkowitz and Count Joseph Wrtby, who two years before, in conjunction with six other gentlemen of title and wealth, had founded the great musical association of Bohemia, Carl Maria was at once presented by Gänsbacher. Both these noblemen received Weber with the liveliest interest, presented him in turn to all the greatest personages in Prague, who could be any way influential in forwarding his purpose, and took upon themselves all the arrangements with the authorities of the city in his behalf; so that all the preparations for the important concert seemed to him to have been conjured together by the magic wand of a troop of beneficent fairies. Every encouragement at the same time was given to the young artist by Liebich, the director of the theatre, an individual of imposing and colossal mien, with a true-hearted but cunning expression of face. This excellent man, who suffered from a very painful malady, was accustomed to assemble every member of his company, without exception, from the youngest soubrette to the oldest "heavy tragedian," around his

bed, as that of a respected father, and, whilst addressing all by the most affectionate little names of endearment, would arrange, like a good old patriarch, all the business of his admirably conducted theatre. When Carl Maria entered his sick-room, he stretched out his hand to him with a benevolent smile, and addressed him at once with the words, "So you are *the* Weber! a capital fellow, I hear, and a very devil on the piano. Of course you want me to buy your operas. Very well! I hear they are good. One fills up an evening; t'other doesn't. I'll give you 1500 florins Viennese for the two. Is it a bargain?" It was a bargain: and the whole affair was settled in a moment. From the first, Liebich was charmed by Carl Maria's straightforward jovial manner, as well as by the steadiness and soundness of his judgment. He watched the young artist with rapid searching scrutiny during the whole of their interview, and immediately determined on a project, which, in the year to come, was destined to give so important a direction to Weber's whole career. But, for the present, he kept his own counsel, and only exacted a promise from the young composer that he would come over to Prague the following spring, and conduct the rehearsals of his own operas.

Whilst all the preparations for the concert were going on, Carl Maria was winning all hearts wherever he went, by his extempore performances on the piano. In some of the houses, where he was thus cordially received, he was afterwards to find a home. No wonder that in this hospitable city, where all seemed

pleasure, comfort, ease, and allurement, the two wandering artists, thus courted and respected, should have found their own hearts warm to it. Their concert duly took place three days before Christmas. Carl Maria's imp had again done his best to spoil all. Snow, sleet, and fog swept through the narrow streets of Prague on that unauspicious day. But the little demon of evil failed once more. The great concert-hall was crowded not only by all the brilliant aristocracy of the place, but by all the more opulent and enlightened among the citizens and tradespeople. Carl Maria himself conducted. All went well. Weber's newly arranged overture, "The Ruler of the Spirits," was admirably performed, and excited an almost wild enthusiasm. Bärmann played his favourite concert piece by his young friend; and Weber executed his own piano concerto in E flat, with equal applause. But the main attraction of the evening was "Der Erste Ton," the words of which were declaimed by Madame Löwe, the favourite actress of the public of Prague, not at all, it may be said, to the advantage of the work. But success was the great directing genius of all. The concert brought to each of the artists a clear profit of 1240 florins Viennese. The next day they went their way.

The route of the wanderers lay through Dresden. Here they had hoped to have presented their letters of introduction, from the King and Queen of Bavaria, to the various members of the royal family of Saxony, and to have been honoured with an invitation to play at the palace. But the court was absent. So they

returned their letters to their pockets; and after a very brief stay in the Saxon capital, where, as Carl Maria notes, he "heard the celebrated soprano Sassaroli sing vespers like a demi-god to Rastelli's execrable music," they hastened to Leipsic, where they arrived on the 27th, and looked upon its old towers with a certain degree of awe.

In Leipsic, Carl Maria's first steps were naturally turned to the house of court-counsellor Rochlitz, the celebrated critic and editor of the "Musik-Zeitung." His correspondence with this influential man had inspired Weber with a high esteem for him; but the repeated interferences of his unlucky father could not but impress him with many anxious doubts as to the result of his first interview. Rochlitz, however, received the young artist with open arms; and, without allusion to the disagreeable circumstances of the past, introduced Carl Maria, with genuine and ready kindliness, at a great sacrifice of his own time and comfort, to all the principal notabilities of the place.

The respect which the presiding musical genius of Leipsic naturally inspired, rendered the prospects of their proposed concert of more importance to the two artists, than in almost any other town. Bärmann, who, as a true lover of the pleasures of the table and of his own personal ease, was now growing somewhat stout, spoiled too as he was by the homage paid to his extraordinarily handsome personal appearance, left the whole care of the arrangements to his young active zealous friend. But all went far from smoothly. Two of the great musical celebrities residing in the

town received the young composer in any but friendly fashion. Old Capellmeister Schicht, spite of all Carl Maria's genuine admiration for his able conductorship, sniffed in the young man a pupil of the detested Abbé Vogler, and needed no other reason for turning his back coldly on him. The celebrated old violinist, Campagnuoli, whose life had been one of strange adventure, although admired by the young artist, and respected as the friend of Cherubini, was not more amiably disposed. All Carl Maria's advances, moreover, to the brothers Seconda, who at that time contrived to manage the two theatres of Dresden and Leipsic conjointly, and whom the young composer had hoped to interest in favour of his operas, signally failed; as indeed might have been naturally expected in the case of two directors, whose prepossessions were enlisted on the side of Italian opera alone. Other friends, however, came around him; and with the musical publishers Härtel and Kühnel, who received him with ready friendship in their houses, he was enabled to form a connexion which, in a business point of view, could not but be of signal advantage to him in the future.

But for Leipsic Carl Maria could find no affection in his heart. Perhaps the contrast of the still, dull, uninteresting town, devoid of all brilliancy of illustrious names, or even of wealth, with the great city which he had just left, so full of splendour, luxury, and excitement, threw a chill over all his feelings. The long delay occasioned in the arrangement of his concert, doubtless also annoyed and wearied

him. At all events, he expressed himself in no favourable terms of the unfortunate town. "Beer, tobacco, and bowls, are all they live for here," he wrote in disgust. "The balls are a bore; the girls are plain; the students a rough uncouth lot." In the latter, however, he found afterwards good allies. "My only comfort here," he wrote to Gänsbacher, "is that I have time, and to spare, for literary work."

Upon literary work, then, at the commencement of the year 1812, in Leipsic, Carl Maria was principally engaged. The scarcity of men of general education, who were at the same time thorough proficients in musical science, and ready and elegant wielders of the pen, caused a constant stream of requests and demands, from the editors of the various musical papers of Germany, to flow in upon a man in every way so competent as was Weber. The young man had taken an especial fancy to literary labour, as was natural in one so successful; and, at this period, there was every fear that his fatal facility with his pen might have completely overbalanced his musical productiveness. So impressed was he with the importance, as well as the remunerative results of his critical writings, that he even began to conceive the idea of severing himself from his artistic travelling companion Bärmann, and settling for some time in Leipsic, in order to devote himself entirely to literary production. Above all, he was desirous of completing a novel, to be called "The Wanderings of a Musical Artist," the design of which he had for some time past conceived, and the rough plan of

which he had already written down. He had laid up stores for the execution of this work at all times—in his travelling-carriage, or in his boat—by mountain-path, or glacier side—and made loose notes of characters and situations. This tale was intended to give a description of an artist's life, not as the poet dreams it, but as it exists in its daily and hourly realities, in its bitter experiences and its fleeting triumphs, in its friendships and its envies, jealousies and intrigues. All that his nature had of genial humour, all that his heart had of affection, all that his soul had of poetry, was to be poured into this labour of love. Doubtless the work, from a pen like his, would have been rich in beauties, as it would have been original and attractive in its paintings of the real life of artists. But the musician might have lost far more than the author might have gained. Fortunately an event took place which plunged the young artist once more into the stream of the practical exercise of his true art.

Carl Maria was working hard on his book, with all the zeal and fire of his nature, when an invitation came to him from the Duke of Gotha, to pay a visit to his court, and spend some time there. The Duke had heard of the compositions of the young musician, whose reputation was already spreading far and wide; he had read Carl Maria's criticisms; communications from the Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria had given him alluring accounts of the young man's acquirements. The letter, written in admirable strain, in itself excited Weber's interest. He knew

by reputation the man whom Napoleon had declared to be one of the most talented princes he had ever known. He decided at once to accept the invitation, at all events on trial. A presentiment seemed to tell him that the Duke would exercise an important influence on his future career, maybe play a leading part in the drama of his life. His presentiment did not deceive him. After a concert at Leipsic, given with Bärmann, in which both his "Ruler of the Spirits" and his "First Tone" excited the greatest enthusiasm, and won the most valuable tribute of appreciation from that severe and conscientious critic Rochlitz, he started, with his artist friend, on the 17th January 1812, for Gotha.

The Duke Emil Leopold August of Saxe-Gotha was one of the most interesting, and, at the same time, one of the most extraordinary personages, who had ever sat upon a throne. Although brought up under the strictest military discipline, he was a warm and enthusiastic devotee to art in all its branches, and knew how to turn the treasures of information, with which his mind was so richly stored, and his own various natural talents, to the very best account. Although eccentric at times, almost to the verge of insanity, he had the solid good sense to cherish his excellent and liberal ministers, to do all he could for the improvement of his lovely little land, to establish educational institutes, and to refuse to lavish his treasury upon the customary extravagance of a military force, at the idea of which he scoffed as child's play in so small a state. During the wars with Na-

poleon he had gone on his steady course for the good of his country, amidst all the political difficulties of the time, so as even to win the esteem of the mighty invader. The exercise of his own undoubted abilities, however, was always varying in its nature and direction with every breath of frantic caprice: one day he was full of poetical fire, and wrote Idyls of the wildest fancy; another he was employed upon musical compositions to his own verses; now he dictated to his startled secretary an artistic novel, the chapters of which were spun out to interminable length; now he was eagerly occupied in writing letters, admirable in their style and full of the noblest thoughts, to his literary and intellectual friends, among whom was Jean Paul Richter.

Sometimes the Duke would be suddenly taken with a fancy to exercise all the powers of that fine pungent wit, of which he was a master, on all around him—never failing, however, to bestow some special favour upon any whom his keen satire might have wounded—sometimes to startle and puzzle his whole court by the absurdest whims. One day, upon some great ceremonial occasion, when all the court was assembled in "grand gala," he appeared in the circle, and passed from one to another, saying a few words to each with the most amiable expression of countenance; yet, strange to say, each looked surprised and bewildered. "What did the Duke say to you?" was eagerly asked afterwards. "To me," said the first, "he whispered, in the most friendly way, One, two, three!" "And to me," said the

second, "in the most condescending fashion, Four, five, six!" The Duke had counted thus through the whole assembly, instead of speaking the usual senseless words of stale court-talk, which were customary on such occasions. Sometimes he had appeared in a lady's gown as his court-dress; sometimes in Roman costume, with toga, red sandals, and a garland on his head. One day he gave Vulpius for some state service a fan, which he took from a lady's hand. Almost every day he appeared with differently coloured hair; so that his own servants were frequently at a loss to recognise him.

The Duke was of noble stature, with a fine forehead, handsomely formed Roman nose, and beautiful deep-set eyes, the expression of which was full of fire and yet loving kindliness. His mouth was full of meaning, but received from the upturned corners and protruding under-lip a character nigh approaching to that of a satyr, without, however, detracting from his prepossessing personal appearance. In all his person, at the same time, there was something soft, almost effeminate—a manner which may have in some degree accounted for his passion for female attire. He was a great friend of pleasant social intercourse, but insisted always on the most courteous breeding in the manners of his court; without, however, being a stickler for the old pigtail ceremonials with which poor courtiers had been plagued for half a century. Nothing was more obnoxious to his feelings than the rough, coarse, military manners which were the fashion then at many of the

German courts, in servile imitation of Napoleonic practice in Paris. Such was the strange but noble and amiable prince who so pressingly invited Weber to his court, for the chief purpose, as it afterwards appeared, of engaging the young composer upon a species of melo-dramatic improvisation, from which he expected a very great effect.

At the court of Gotha resided, in the year 1812, the great composer, Spohr, then occupied upon the final touches to be given to his "Last Judgment." There is no doubt that the Duke considered the presence of so illustrious an artist a high honour to himself. But the rough arrogant manners of Spohr rendered him but little beloved either at court or among the general public. Towards Carl Maria the celebrated composer was even more than ungracious. He looked down upon him as an artist, and pertinaciously insisted on treating him only as a sort of better amateur. But, in spite of this real or affected contempt, Spohr evidently looked askance upon the intercourse of Carl Maria with the Duke, as though he feared the seductive influence of the amiable and genial young man upon their mutual patron.

Other acquaintances, however, came round the young stranger, with that ready friendship which he was accustomed every where to win for himself. The Duke was absent on Carl Maria's arrival; but the young artist was received with simple kindness and distinction by the Prince Friedrich, the Duke's younger brother. Many days were spent in exhibiting his talents in private circles, and in making pre-

parations for a concert, which eventually took place, with fair remunerative success, on the 25th February, before the Duke gave sign of life. At last came a letter from the Duke, couched in that peculiarly seductive and winning style, of which he was a consummate master, but cruelly disappointing to the young expectant artist. It expressed the Duke's regrets that, as unforeseen business demanded his almost immediate departure for Erfurt, he would not be able to enjoy Weber's society in Gotha as much as he had expected; but that he hoped in the autumn to allure him to a more protracted stay, and, meanwhile, trusted to see him as soon as possible at the palace, in order to have the pleasure of making his acquaintance.

At first the young composer felt himself aggrieved. Had he not come to Gotha at the Duke's express invitation? But the letter was so charming. How should he act? Thus debating with himself he drove to court, and was enchanted by the flattering reception he obtained, and the winning manners of the Duke. The two seemed to be friends at once. Between the poetic element of the prince's nature, and the creative genius of the young musician's, there was an immediate sympathy. Were the artistic portraits of the two to be sketched, it would be impossible to deny the existence of a strange likeness between the two men. The portrait of the prince would be a caricature, however, of the portrait of the artist. The clearly developed features of genius in the latter would appear distorted and confused

in the uncertain, although genial outline of the former.

From the moment of their meeting, Weber was scarcely allowed out of the Duke's sight, and partook with him of every meal. Melodies had to be improvised on the piano or guitar to the Duke's poetry; or the Duke's compositions had to be looked over; or literary and critical ideas were to be interchanged until late in the night. Impromptu performances had to be got up with Spohr and Bärmann, to which the Duke listened with delight and enthusiastic applause. One species of artistic or intellectual exercise followed another, until the strain of the excessive excitement was almost more than Carl Maria could bear; feverish sleepless nights followed upon these days of incessant mental exertion. Spohr looked on and laughed. "Had I wanted to do all this intellectual business with the Duke," he said to Weber, "I should long since have held no fiddlestick here." The young man's mind was, in truth, in the wildest tumult; and he resolved that, when the time for his prolonged stay in Gotha should come, his energies should be held in more prudent check. At last this artistic debauch came to an end; and Carl Maria departed from Gotha, before being driven wholly mad, with the intention of continuing his art-tour with Bärmann. Weimar was to be their first destination.

At the end of January the two artists arrived at Weimar. Here they had letters to the Grand Duchess Maria Paulowna, the talented daughter of

the Emperor Paul of Russia, and the wife of the hereditary Prince of Weimar, Carl Friedrich. By this charming princess they were received with the most flattering kindness. Immediately on their arrival, her influence was used to prevail upon the Duke to give a concert extraordinary at court for their special appearance. In her own palace, she welcomed them with the most courteous grace; and here were many evenings spent by Carl Maria in pleasant intercourse and the enjoyment of the best music, with as little pretension as in the humblest family circle.

It was on one of these evenings, just as Weber was playing, with Bärmann, some variations composed for the latter, upon a theme from Carl Maria's "Sylvana," that Göthe entered the apartment. Without taking any notice of the artists, the great man seated himself, talked loudly with a lady during the whole performance, and rose to leave the company the moment the music ceased. Weber, however, was presented to him. With a slight acknowledgment, and a trivial question, Göthe turned away and was gone. The two artists, who, with a fair share of fame of their own, had been accustomed to tokens of notice and regard, were all the more wounded at the behaviour of the prince of poets, as they had so long loved and reverenced him in their hearts. Strange to say, in after life, spite of all his endeavours, Weber was never able to meet with a favourable reception from Göthe. Indeed, at a subsequent period, the great poet took occasion, in one

marked instance, to treat him with coldness and repulsion.

All the more warmly was Carl Maria attracted to Wieland, whose acquaintance he made at Weimar. The strange feeling, which drew him towards the old poet, might now be looked upon, by a fancifully disposed mind, as a presentiment, that from one of his grandest works would be derived the source of one of his own greatest operas. He had visited the old man on the very day of his arrival at Weimar. "I have seen Father Wieland," he noted in his diary; "the deepest reverence and emotion must fill the hearts of all who draw near him. His hearty, sterling, German manner wins you at once, and irresistibly. He asked me to play: and I played to him with fullest heart and soul. He seemed affected by my performance, and said so much which touched me, that I left him filled with joy."

Among the many celebrities by whom Carl Maria was surrounded in Weimar, two alone were destined to exercise any enduring influence upon his after life. The one was Vertuch, the creator and editor of the "Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung;" the other was Pius Alexander Wolff, a man of talent, of a somewhat cold and polished nature, who was then occupied with his production of "The Steadfast Prince," after Calderon —a work which, in spite of all the misgivings of the dramatic world, excited the greatest sensation. The classical repose of this man was most imposing to Carl Maria. His whole bearing was of that school of Göthe which inspired reverence and respect. Thus,

whilst his style had no influence upon the young composer's own creations, his individuality interested Weber so strongly, that a friendship sprang up between them, one of the fruits of which was to be the music to Wolff's drama of "Preciosa."

An attempt, it appears, was made by Carl Maria's new patroness, the Grand Duchess Maria Paulowna, to have his opera of "Sylvana" produced at Weimar; but, for the present at least, the intrigues of Capellmeister Müller were too well-arranged for this intention to be put into execution. The opera at Weimar, which Göthe encouraged, with the idea, shared also by Schiller, that musical productions, by giving a feeling for rhythm, reacted favourably upon the true interests of the drama, had, in spite of the efforts of more inspired musical natures to the contrary, assumed something of the cold, measured, rigidly-disciplined school of theatrical declamation, which was supported by the influence of the great poet. Weber, of whose nature strong warm feeling was one of the principal elements, found no great attraction, consequently, in the operatic performances as then produced upon the stage of Weimar.

On leaving Weimar, Weber and Bärmann were again in Dresden. Here poor Carl Maria was necessitated, in furtherance of his plans, to make as many as thirty-three visits on one day! But Dresden was not fated to be much more propitious to the young artist than on his previous stay. Of the numerous personages to whom he had recommendations, but few took the slightest notice of his presence. After all

the tokens of kindness and distinction he had received, on all his wanderings, this marked indifference of the Dresdeners smote him to the quick. The all-powerful cabinet-minister, Marcolini, however, a polite and cunning Italian, who seemed to have pierced with his sharp eyes the very folds of the letter brought by Weber from the Crown Prince of Bavaria to the Queen, smiled on him, and gave him the hope that he might be able to perform in "just the very smallest little circle of the royal family;" and two days afterwards he was graciously received by the Queen of Saxony in private audience. The performance, in fact, took place just previously to the departure of the two artists, as was promised, in "the very smallest little circle." The "very smallest little circle," however, was greatly delighted. Even the severe features of the King relapsed into a smile of approbation; and, with overpowering thanks, and two handsome snuff-boxes, the artists were courteously dismissed.

But, meanwhile, all the arrangements for the concert were being made amidst hindrances and vexations of every kind, and with all that dilatory aversion to progress which has ever been characteristic of the charming little capital of Saxony. Weber thus had time to visit the collections of pictures and treasures of art; to delectate himself with Sassaroli's wonderful singing once again; and to attend the concerts of that admirable institute, the "Harmonie," where he had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of its worthy and talented founder Dreissig,

the court organist. The subscriptions for the concert proceeded lamentably, however. The fine society of Dresden had no interest in artists who were not Italians; the diplomatic corps had no money to spend; the Court was weak. When Bärmann and Weber looked at the subscription-list, they burst out laughing, and exclaimed, "They won't catch us in Dresden again in a hurry."

The evening came; the room was nearly empty; the receipts, when divided, amounted to twenty-eight thalers for each artist. The audience, however, made up in quality of applause what it lacked in quantity; and although the Dresden critic declared Weber's style a mere imitation of Spohr, and his music strange and false in modulation and harmony when new, the scanty public recognised the young composer's genius.

CHAPTER XII.

BERLIN IN 1812.

On the 20th February Weber arrived at Berlin. It was the first time that he was destined to make a sojourn in the great North-German city of sufficient duration to allow its peculiar intellectual and artistic tendencies to exercise any permanent effect on his own organisation. As yet his artistic character had been almost entirely developed by the influence of the more stimulating South-German nature, in a course of life, which acted upon him rather powerfully than profoundly, amidst a lively people, and under a genial sky. The companions, in whose intercourse he had received the impressions mirrored on his own nature, had been principally jovial young artists, and merry students, lively fellows, neophytes in the art of living, but with honest souls, on the one hand; and on the other, debauched young nobles, court officials of the lowest principles, profligate and capricious princes, and, with few exceptions, women of light hearts and lighter manners. His genius had probably lost nothing during his erratic course. He

had turned over the leaves of the book of passion hastily; but his heart had not been corrupted as he read; and his artist nature had stored up a rich portfolio of the most lively and varied pictures, the profusion of which excited his own astonishment, whenever he opened it to hunt up studies for new works. His artistic individuality, as afterwards formed, may have been bountifully enriched under such circumstances; but it could never have been completed. For this purpose other, and in some respects directly opposed, influences were needed.

The sphere, which the genius of Weber was formed to fill, in the full development of its originality, was not to be reached by the same path, as that so gloriously trodden by the immortal old masters. The endless flow of great or delightful thought as it streamed forth from Father Haydn's soul; the Raphaelite beauty which gleamed in Mozart's music, as if by heavenly intuition; the statuesquely chiselled embodiments of great, simple, profound forms in Glück, were all alike far from the power of creation, which Weber's genius imperatively demanded. His manner of production is only to be understood by the recognition in him of a sort of second-sight beyond and out of his artistic genius. His creations were regulated by his faculty of standing apart as his own public. He was the first of all the great masters, who possessed the peculiar art of hearing his own works with the ears of the masses; of transforming, in thought, his dark and narrow chamber into an illuminated theatre filled with a

listening throng—his work-table, covered with his score, into a brilliant scenic stage; to feel with all the thousand hearts, and see with all the thousand eyes. It was this singular power, which gave into Weber's hand the magic wand to conjure up those irresistible effects, which carried away the masses as well as the musician, and gave so great a distinctive quality to his music. But the public, with which Weber felt in common, was always an ideal and a noble public; and thus his effects were always genuine and true effects, founded on the best feelings, and sinking deep into men's hearts.

This peculiar power, it must be admitted, was not without its own peculiar danger. Musical critics, who considered a strict harmonious architectural structure in a work of art as its best attribute, have declared that Weber's lavish use of melodies and harmonies, as means of captivating his public, brilliant and beautiful as they may have been, detracted from the plastic form and pure contour of the whole, and like rich embroideries, however precious the jewels with which they were beset, ruined the chastely beautiful folds of the garment. But there is no doubt, that Weber succeeded in reducing the danger of this peculiarity to its minimum; whilst, at the same time, to this persistent objective contemplation of his own works was owing that local tone in his music, which he borrowed from local colouring in painting, and which he first used with such decided weight and importance. It is the inimitable manner in which this local tone is carried

out in Weber's works, which specifically distinguishes them from those of his predecessors, and bestows on them, in spite of any excrescences in effects of melody and harmony, that rounding of the true line of beauty, which is, no doubt, required in genuine classical creations.

In order to acquire the better qualities of his own peculiar method of production, it was necessary for Weber to submit himself to a severe course of that merciless self-criticism, which is often fatal to weakly endowed artistic natures, and which is generally so hateful even to the greatest. Berlin was evidently the best place for the encouragement of this difficult study in the young artist. Its advantage was stamped in the character, which had been developed in the population of the Prussian capital since the days of the two preëminent geniuses, who had been the leading influences of the great German Lutheran power,—the philosopher among kings, Frederick, and the king among philosophers, Kant. To this general tendency upon Weber's mind contributed also the individuality of the personages with whom he was here brought together. No tender loving prudent father could have chosen them better to lead a genius of Weber's peculiar temperament into the indisputably right path, in which it was to reach its truest ends and aims.

With Weber's sojourn in Berlin, in the year 1812, may be said to have closed the period of his talent's youth, as clearly as that of his stormy ill-regulated career was terminated by his flight from Stuttgart

in 1810. Thenceforth all his artistic productions were to be, without any swerving to the right or to the left, so many steps upward on that ladder of art, which was to lead him to the summit, attained in "Der Freischütz," "Euryanthe," and "Oberon."

Immediately on his arrival in Berlin, Weber was welcomed, in the friendliest manner, to the house of his friend Mayerbeer's parents. In the princely and luxurious dwelling of the rich banker he may be said to have found a home of unwonted comfort. With his 'arrival,' however, commenced also the heavy struggle of an artist's life. It was naturally his most ardent desire to see his opera of "Sylvana," the best and greatest dramatic work which he had yet written, produced upon the Berlin stage, for the judgment of the leading spirits of North-German civilisation. To carry this purpose into effect was indeed a struggle. The principal musical directors of the Berlin opera, Bernhard Anselm Weber and Righini, received him with repelling coldness, shrugged their shoulders, and told him, after a hearing of the music, that, although his opera gave evidences of musical talent, it presented too many difficulties for representation on the stage. The former even declared, in his usual coarse and repulsive manner, that it was a very crude work, requiring considerable revision. It may have been that, in his controversies with the two old gentlemen respecting his opera, the young composer displayed a slightly presumptuous confidence, which was looked upon as offensive,—it may have been that the presence of a young artist, so rapidly rising

into fame, was in no ways agreeable to old conservative "pigtail" views,—but, at all events, both the men, who were at that time in the zenith of their influence and popularity in Berlin, proved themselves, less in word than in actual deed, his most decided adversaries. Even Iffland, the celebrated dramatic author, who had lately resumed the general direction of the theatre, clearly showed, by his marked attentions to Bärmann and his disregard of Weber, on the occasion of a visit made to him by the two artists, how little he was inclined to forward the views of the young composer. This struggle against such influential opponents, at his first start, nigh crushed all Weber's hopes. Fortunately, the zealous and ardent recommendations of the young artist, in the letters of the Crown Prince of Bavaria to Friedrich Wilhelm III., contrived to secure him a very amiable reception from the generally morose and uncongenial king; and, in the knowledge of the favourable feeling at court, the two old presiding genii of the opera felt themselves obliged to change their tactics, at all events in outward semblance.

With Zelter, the director of the Singing Academy, and founder of the "Liedertafel," a society for the cultivation of male voices only in choral practice, then first instituted, Weber scarcely succeeded much better. Zelter was a rough, obstinate, rigid man, never known to yield except to Göthe, before whom, however, he bowed down and worshipped with nigh disgusting prostration; and such a character was every way antipathetical to the lively, excitable, deli-

cately feeling nature of the young composer. But by introducing Weber into the "Singakademie," where ladies, artists, officers, and government officials were alike subjected to the baton, which he wielded, rather as a stick of punishment than a director's truncheon, Zelter rendered the young artist a good service, by enabling him to study practically the tendencies and results of an institution, then singular of its kind, but since so widely established throughout Germany. By the same means also Weber was enabled to study the constitution of the "Liedertafel," then composed only of men of proved artistic distinction. This latter institution,—imitations of which have since flooded all Germany, to the serious detriment of its first purpose and feeling,—was, in many points of view, of more importance than was recognised by its own founder and supporters. By the means of united feeling in song, it had sown the seeds of united patriotic feeling in another sphere—seeds which were fast sending forth shoots of political vitality, afterwards destined to bear fruits of great and significant importance. Love of country had been sedulously burnt out of the land by the fire of the invader, and his allies and helpers. But the genius of poetry had preserved under the ashes the words, "Fatherland," "Hearth and Home," "Freedom," and "Honour;" and these were found by noble patriotic hearts, who sang them in low tones at first among themselves, until the sound swelled into a war-cry.

Now, in Weber, whose life had been spent in

wandering through the many then existing little German states, a homeless youth, the whole feeling of the word "Fatherland" had necessarily never been in any way developed; and thus the introduction of any strong political tendency, as a foundation for musical ideas in composition, had never as yet occurred to him. But the spirit which lay in the songs of the "Liedertafel" could not fail to exercise its influence upon an impressionable nature like his. The spark received first burst into a flame in the composition of a cantata, entitled "Turnier-Bankett," to words by Bornemann, which was produced in the month of June in the "Liedertafel," obtained a great success by its freshness and originality, was even praised by the cantankerous Zelter, and long remained one of the great pieces of the institution upon notable occasions. The same freshly awakened tendency, which was thereafter to contribute so greatly to Weber's immortal fame, again broke forth, a little later, in a song, composed for barytone voice, with accompaniment of wind-instruments, called "Krieg's Eid," "The War Oath"—a composition of grand and broad simplicity, which, when executed by the soldiers of the Brandenburg brigade, drew tears from the eyes of the captain and of the chaplain, Mann, who had himself suggested the composition to Weber.

Through his introduction to the "Liedertafel" also, Weber made the acquaintance of a personage whose influence upon the musical life of Berlin was at that time extremely great, although now almost gone from the memory of man. This was Chamber-

lain Friedrich von Drieberg, a man of undoubted talent and vast acquirements, who had weakened his own natural great powers by scattering them on every side, and on the most heterogeneous subjects. At one time he would be occupied upon the invention of a diving apparatus—at another, upon a thick quarto volume on the "Music of the ancient Greeks," one of his favourite subjects—now on an endless controversy on the science of acoustics—now on the composition of operas, none of which, however, received more than a very fugitive success, except his "Sänger und Schneider." Drieberg was an openhearted amiable individual, although too prone, from the oracular character too freely granted to his opinions, to look upon himself as "Sir Oracle" in person in his judgments upon art. Impressed, it would seem, by the powers of divination generally accorded to this singular man, Weber had the highest reliance on his opinion; and Drieberg, at the same time, although always ready to stretch forth a gentle helping hand, was never disposed to withhold the bitter cup of criticism from the lips of the artist, if he thought the unpalatable medicine necessary. Thus when, after endless struggles, Weber had succeeded, by the influential means of many persons in society, whose attachment and good wishes he had gained, in neutralising the persistent opposition of his adversaries in the opera-house, and in obtaining at last the rehearsal of his opera of "Sylvana," although he had gained the suffrages of all the singers engaged, as well as of the choice public admitted on the occasion, he was met by a far

severer criticism from his patron Drieberg than from the most depreciating of his enemies. Drieberg declared the music to be overladen with unnecessary effects, and obscure in intention, the vocal portions sacrificed to the instrumental, and—what was the cruellest cut of all to an artist—the whole composition wearisome from its monotony. Weber was struck down by this judgment. But his spirit of self-criticism was awakened.

"There is much that is true in his remarks," he wrote, on reaching home after this sad rebuff. "Any new opera I may write shall be simpler in its effects. Many pieces, from compression, have lost their original musical character, and have become too varied in colour. The instrumentation is certainly more laboured than I should make it now, but still not more laden than in the operas of Mozart. His last remarks made me very sad; because I am unable to judge whether they are true or not. If it be true that I have no variety of ideas, then I have no genius, and throughout life have bestowed all my energies, all my zeal, all my devotion on an art for which God has given me no vocation. The uncertainty on this point renders me wretched. I cannot sink into mediocrity. If I cannot climb the highest step in the ladder, I had rather earn my scanty bread as a mere piano-teacher. But no! I will still tread on in the path I have chosen. Perseverance wins the goal! But I must watch strictly over all I do. Time will show whether I have really honourably used the advantages bestowed on me."

No better picture can be given of Weber's noble aspirations than in these few lines, written in the stillness of his chamber, for no eye but his own; so full of meekness, self-knowledge, and trust in his own honesty of purpose. Such lines were well engraved upon the heart of every genuine young artist.

Nothing discouraged, after this outpouring of his feelings, Weber set to work upon a thorough revision of his opera, threw aside his two principal airs for tenor and soprano, and composed two new airs in their place. He was richly rewarded for his act of self-sacrifice, by the discovery that his dramatic intuition had gained in clearness and richness, and that his management of the means employed was more masterly than when the opera was originally composed. It was with a heart relieved of some of its weight, that he again sat in his little room to write in his diary the words, "My opera has won by these two new airs: and I have gained new notions about the true form of such pieces. I have remarked also that I must watch strictly over my manner of treatment. In the forms of my melodies the suspensions are too frequent and too prominent. I must also seek more variety in my tempos and my rhythms." What self-criticism in these lines! The sharpest-sighted critic could never have described the composer's peculiarities, and the point at which he had arrived in his art, with greater clearness and precision.

Extraordinary difficulties, however, in spite of the accorded rehearsals, still lay in the way of the production of "Sylvana." Capellmeister Righini

fell ill, and went away to Italy, where he died in the August of the same year. The whole affair now remained in the hands of Bernhard Anselm Weber. There is no doubt that this distinguished musician had rendered great services, both as composer and director, to the development of German opera in Berlin. He had witnessed there, at the beginning of the century, the great fight between the Italian opera of the princes, and the German opera of the people, which had been decided in favour of the latter far earlier in the Prussian capital than in any other city in Germany. The thoroughly German feelings and predilection for German music in Bernhard Anselm Weber, united to his eminent talents and his untiring zeal, had given him a very considerable preponderance in any struggle against the exclusively Italian school. The genuine German character of Carl Maria's opera, which had indisposed Righini on its first hearing, could not therefore have prejudiced his colleague against the young composer; nor was Bernhard Anselm Weber known to be enviously hostile to rising talent. But still he threw every available hindrance in the way of the production of the opera; and his influence was great. On the one hand, as a severe formalist of the school of the elder masters, he set his face steadfastly against the novelties in the score of the young composer, which he looked upon as illicit departures from established rules, and, as such, unpardonable improprieties; on the other, he had conceived a dislike to the young musician from their very first in-

terview, when Carl Maria had wounded him by his glowing admiration of Mozart, whom he himself had always undervalued. Another circumstance may also have contributed to the antipathy of Bernhard Anselm to his young namesake. No sooner had Righini left Berlin, than the report became prevalent that Carl Maria was likely to receive the vacant appointment of musical director in his place; and the old master of the opera had evidently no wish to see a young talented fellow of lively temperament and energetic character seated in rivalry by his side. The production of the young man's opera might produce the very realisation of his fears. Could he be expected, then, to lend a hand to promote so dreaded an event? On the contrary, Iffland was informed that the expenses of the production would be enormous; the members of the company that the difficulties of the music were insurmountable; and the public in general that so crude a work could not possibly do honour to the Royal Opera of Berlin. When, however, the rehearsals were undertaken, chiefly through the active instrumentality of Prince Radziwill, and the terrified opera-singers found that the music was greatly to their taste, a thousand little practical difficulties were sought out to postpone the representation to any indefinite period. An interval of six weeks was thus made to intervene between the first rehearsal and the second. A less energetic nature than that of Carl Maria would have given up the affair as lost.

During the period of these struggles and delays,

Carl Maria had exercised his usual spell of amiability over new friends and acquaintances, of whom a rich store gathered around him. In none of the many houses he visited, was he received with more distinction and friendliness combined, than in that of Prince Radziwill. The prince, himself a composer and excellent violoncello player, opened his palace not only to the great aristocratic society of Berlin, but to all artists of note. Good music was cultivated in every form beneath his roof; and Weber was ever welcome. Indeed, the young composer seems to have won the heart of the dilettante prince by reconstructing the adagio of his own quintett in B, in compliance with the suggestion of his Mecænas. Surrounded thus by many distinguished men, among whom was the old poet and novelist Tiedge, and women of rank, note, and charming manner, Carl Maria found two persons to whom his heart attached itself with that warmth of affection which was so characteristic of his impulsive nature, although after different fashion. The one was the author Heinrich Lichtenstein, afterwards so celebrated as a zoologist, who had just returned from an exploring journey in Southern Africa with a very considerable reputation. Lichtenstein was an individual who was sure to attract a temperament like that of Carl Maria. His enthusiastic impulsiveness, his seductive amiability, and his clear judgment, which, as Weber expressed it, "took the spectacles of passion and prejudice from every man's nose," combined with his indisputable talent, were in themselves attractive. His form was short, but broad-

shouldered and vigorous; his features were marked and somewhat Jewish. The quality of his voice was kindly and winning; and he possessed the precious secret of being able to win the hearts of all whom he thought worth his while to win. No wonder that this charming man, distinguished at the same time for his scientific attainments, his musical knowledge, and his genial social qualities, should have exercised a powerful influence over the talent, mind, and manners of the young composer. The other personage was Amalia Sebald, the younger of two beautiful and highly-gifted sisters, who were devoted to the cause of music. She possessed a magnificent voice. Carl Maria was fascinated, and conceived for her a warm and profound affection, but as respectful as it was ardent. The lady married shortly afterwards; and the dream was at an end.

With so many attached friends, who had his interests deeply at heart, Weber was induced to arrange two concerts, which took place in the month of March, in the concert-room of the theatre, in conjunction with his friend Bärmann. But once more was his "evil star" in the ascendant. It seemed to owe him now a long-delayed grudge in compensation for his otherwise pleasant fortunes. It visited him in the double form of disastrous intelligence from the seat of war, and the most appalling weather. As far as pecuniary results were concerned, the concerts were thorough failures. At the first, the King was present, and the applause of the scanty audience enthusiastic. At the second, the overture of "The

Ruler of the Spirits" excited an unusual sensation; whilst the young artist's improvisation upon a thema from the "Zauberflöte," given him on the spot by the Princess Radziwill, roused the liveliest astonishment among all, musicians as well as dilettanti, by its wondrous richness of musical ideas, mastery of harmonies, and manual facility, and called down unanimous applause. One result, at least, was gained by these concerts. The most favourable judgment was generally aroused for the young artist's forthcoming dramatic composition. Under the pressure of public opinion and of the repeated expostulations of Weber's warm friends and admirers, it became impossible to postpone much longer the production of "Sylvana." Both Bernhard Anselm Weber and Iffland were obliged to give way. The representation was announced.

But, though the guiding spirits of the opera-house were thus compelled to yield, every preparation was made with an economy which, however worthy of a better cause, now appeared meanness. No expense was allowed for scenery, dresses, and decorations. Not one single scrap of scenery was painted new; the oldest and most worn-out costumes seemed purposely selected from the wardrobe. During the rehearsals the feud between the two Webers reached its climax. Carl Maria demanded the conductorship of his own opera, and was rudely refused; although, on the first representation, the baton was at last reluctantly conceded to him. Irritated by Bernhard Anselm's open intrigues against the production of the work, and his

visible determination to treat it as scurvily as possible, the young composer was no doubt too sharp and decided in his behaviour to the old musician; but in return he knew himself to be assailed with abuse as a "pert, presumptuous Swabian puppy." The opera, however, was well "cast." Madame Müller, long the especial favourite of the Berlin stage, was the "Mechthilde;" Fräulein Maass played and danced the part of "Sylvana" with charm and expression; Eunicke, the tenor, sang "Rudolph" admirably. The orchestra and choruses, when once they had overcome all that was new and unusual in the originality of the composition, had studied the score with unwonted zeal and pleasure. The first representation of the opera was fixed at last for the 10th of July.

The night arrived; Weber, as he wrote to Rochlitz, was "resigned to his fate, whatever it might be," when he entered the orchestra to conduct his work. All went well, however; and the admirable self-possession and precision of the executants was openly ascribed to the quiet, firm, intelligent conductorship of the composer. From the commencement to the end, from the overture to the finale of the third act, almost every piece was rapturously applauded. At no one moment was the success doubtful; and loud cries of "Bravo, Weber!" in general acclamation resounded through the whole house when the curtain fell. Not only for one night was the success triumphant; on every other subsequent representation was popular favour as enthusiastically

expressed; still more, the laudatory judgment of the press was, beyond all precedent, unanimous.

The burst of gratitude for this success is recorded thus in the young composer's diary: "Thank heaven, spite of all cabals the good cause has won the day!" Further on he writes again: "Even my enemies now confess that I have genius; and now, although I feel and acknowledge my defects, I will not lose self-confidence, but march on with courage on the path of art, although with circumspection and watchfulness over self." To his friends Danzi and Rochlitz he wrote a brief and simple account of his triumph with the same modesty, of which the lines above cited are so highly characteristic. Indeed, in both these letters he appears more interested in the affairs of those he cherished than in his own. In that to Rochlitz he says, with quiet pathos, "I am now alone; my good Bärmann has left me to return to his home, his dear ones, and his friends. I wander still amidst strange faces and commune with strange souls." The impression made upon him by his success is most apparent, in his eager desire to recommence dramatic composition. To Rochlitz he writes: "I am still in a miserable plight for the poem of an opera. The confounded poets (no personal allusion, please!) are so difficult to catch. Julius von Voss here has talent and facility; but he has just as much indolence, and ten times more caprice." Again to Danzi: "I want a new subject for an opera terribly, and cannot get one. I ought to be at work on a score for the Prague theatre."

But, in the midst of his first flush of success, Weber had a far heavier weight of sorrow in his heart. It was during the struggle waged relative to the production of "Sylvana," that Carl Maria had received, from Gottfried Weber, a letter, which fell upon him like a thunder-bolt. It announced the death of his father. Old Franz Anton had laid down his uneasy, excitable, bewildered head to rest, on the 16th April, in his humble dwelling at Manheim. He had died somewhat suddenly, at the age of seventy-eight years. The strange, vain, bombastic old gentleman, who had played so important a part in all the earlier scenes of the drama of Carl Maria's life, was no more. In latter years his mind had become more and more confused—his sense of right and wrong, of truth and untruth, more perplexed; and his wretched interference in his son's affairs had been the cause to the unhappy young man of many a misadventure, many a bitter grief. But, in the heart of his sorrowing son, there was no thought of aught but that he had lost a father, rich in many gifts, who had tended him with love and affection, and fostered his budding talent with pride. In his note-book stand the words: "He fell asleep at last, they say. May heaven grant him, in another world, the rest he knew not here! It is an almost intolerable pain to me to think that I have not been able to bestow on him happier days. May God, in his mercy, bless him for all the love he bore me—all the love I so little deserved—and for the education he bestowed on me." This loss, combined with the feeling that he

had no longer in the world even the semblance of a home, smote Weber to the heart. "I am now, indeed, alone," he wrote to Rochlitz; "the consolation that I may still have a home in a friend's heart is my only support. You are right, I know; this perpetual wandering cannot be good for me. But how can I do otherwise than seek a fitting arena for the true exercise of my art? With time comes counsel. Meanwhile, I must go on my weary way, doing my best."

It was fortunate for Weber that this sorrow fell upon him at a time when exertion was necessary for the production of his opera, and when literary and musical labours fell unusually heavy on his shoulders, and that he was thus prevented from falling into a state of moody dreaming, which would necessarily have produced a fatal collapse of mind. His forced activity at this period was prodigious. Beyond his literary notices, which were manifold, and the compositions already mentioned, he had written three songs, the most characteristic and charming of which was "Du liebes holdes himmelsüsses Wesen"—a composition full of passion, warm from the artist's soul; a fresh sparkling piece for four voices, "Zur Freude ward geboren;" a chorus for the birthday of old Beer the banker; a piece for six voices, "Lenz erwacht und Nachtigall;" other songs, and several piano pieces, among which was the pianoforte arrangement of his own "Sylvana."

But more soothing to Weber's troubled mind than all his labours was the unexpected arrival in

Berlin of his old friend Berner, now chief organist in Breslau. The companion of his stirring youth appeared upon the threshold of his chamber; and with him seemed to come back all the sunny pictures of the past. From the moment of Berner's visit Weber never left him. They lived the same life, as one heart and soul; played in the same concerts; eat at the same table. In the concert given by Berner on the organ in the garrison church, Weber, if he coöperated no further, at least turned over the pages of the music for his dear old "chum." Nothing, indeed, was more characteristic of Carl Maria than the fact, that as firmly as he clung to those he had once named friends, so firmly also he knew how to attach the chosen ones, for life and for ever, whom he had once called his "brothers of the soul." Never was this important art, by the exercise of which his intellectual beauty touched the heart as much as woman's charms, more signalised than in Berlin, where in all his friendship's relations, hearts flocked around him with every demonstration of attachment, in honour of his moral worth as much as of his genius. Of Weber's life in the Prussian capital his firm ally, Heinrich Lichtenstein, has given, in his works, a rich, warm, and detailed description. A few extracts from it may prove of value in the estimation of his character as well as his peculiar talent.

Lichtenstein had made Weber's acquaintance at the "Sing-Akademie." "When all was over," writes Lichtenstein, in his memoir, "we walked away together. So charming and clever was Weber's con-

versation, so prepossessing the manner in which he discoursed of art in general, and of the Institute and its workings in particular, that it was impossible to say 'Good-by,' and we remained together until late into the night. After that we saw each other frequently." . . . They met in many of the best houses in Berlin. "Weber was as great a master on the guitar as on the piano," continues Lichtenstein; "he used to sing us his own songs, which were not then generally known, with a somewhat weak, but charmingly seductive voice, and with inimitable expression; his accompaniment on the guitar was the most perfect thing of the kind ever heard, and won all hearts. When thus he had roused the company assembled, often in the open air, around the tea-table, to a pitch of unwonted excitement, he would take up at haphazard one of the great works that might be lying there, and so exercised all the wondrous powers he possessed, that every one seemed to think he had never heard the work played before, had never known its truth and force till then. . . . Sometimes, inspired by some song just sung, he would sit down and carry out all the beauties of the musical idea in extempore fantasies; and then, by his complete power over the instrument, his bold mastery of every difficulty in execution, and his clear precision in all the rules of harmony, he would produce a marvellous effect, such as had been never hitherto known in the art of piano-playing. . . . Young artists fell on their knees before him; others embraced him wherever they could get at him: all crowded around him, until his head was

crowned, not with a chaplet of flowers, but with a circlet of happy faces. A solemn, almost melancholy, air would pervade Weber's whole being at such moments; and he would play on, until late into the night, with a feeling which was unsurpassable. In such moments his improvisations differed wholly from similar performances of pianists of greater note, such as Hummell and Kalkbrenner. In all the efforts of the latter, little as they may have intended it, there was always a consciousness of a desire to please. The impression conveyed by Weber was, that at such times he had first found a voice, which enabled him to reveal the deepest feelings of his soul to his beloved friends, and that he only thought how to make those feelings clear and comprehensible." . . In mixed society, when Weber's soul was not attuned to congeniality of feeling, his inspiration has been known to fail him. "In our own select circle, when there was no music, Weber would delight us with his merry tales, and more especially his musical anecdotes, of which he had an inexhaustible store. He would then mock with sportive wit the absurdities and affectations of dilettante musicians, or treat in more earnest spirit the supposed secrets of composition with which some musicians sought to mystify the world. . . . . We seldom separated until late; and even then wandered together to and fro in the night air." He was very fond of giving serenades; "and, in time, we arrived at such a pitch of perfection in this pastime, under Weber's command, that we could master the greatest difficulties."

In treating the subject of the production of "Sylvana," and the difficulties with which Weber had to contend, Lichtenstein writes thus of the hostility which existed between the young composer and the operatic powers: "Somehow Weber never could make his way with the great masters of the time at Berlin. They treated him as a young fellow of no importance; and he responded to their pedantic tone by an assumption of confidence, not unmixed with irritability. Bernhard Anselm Weber and Zelter were more especially hostile to him. With this his personal appearance had somewhat to do. They never could forgive the assumption of vigour in that apparently weak frail form, which contrasted so strangely with their own lustiness. This mutual dislike lasted in all until their deaths; although it never led to any violation of due decorum or want of self-respect in their social relations. To the last none would do justice to the works of the other. I myself, as well as many others, made every attempt to reconcile the hostile spirits; but all our best efforts remained futile."

"Weber's sojourn in Berlin was in many ways advantageous to him," writes Lichtenstein, in another portion of his memoir; "it even determined the character of his life. In earlier years he had been much addicted to youthful follies, had been troubled by debts, and weighed down by pecuniary embarrassments. On the one hand, the devoted circle of friends that clustered round him in Berlin, on the other, the success of his opera, and the remuneration

received from Schlesinger, the publisher, effected a change both in his moral and material condition, by bestowing on him a greater balance of character, and a firmer basis of fortune." Only partially, it would seem, were these words of Lichtenstein true. Whatever the influence of Berlin on his moral status, the great change in his material interests was yet to come.

In the month of August, Weber's days in Berlin were numbered. His activity during this period was undiminished. Some of his songs then composed, among which may be mentioned, "Frei und froh mit munterm Sinn," "Liebe's Glühen," and that beautiful piece for three voices, "Heisse stille Liebe schwebet," marked a period of importance in the development of Weber's genius in this species of composition; and the free fresh spontaneous geniality of these exquisite Lieder seems almost as strangely out of place in an atmosphere impregnated with tea, pedantry, philosophy, Righini-ism, and Sing-Akademie formalities, as was the Italian element of Weber's canzonettes on Swiss mountain sides, or on the waters of the Rhine. His days in Berlin were indeed numbered; and he was shortly to bid adieu, as well to all the many distinguished personages, intercourse with whom had given so important and excellent a direction to his individuality, as to the many friends and genial young artists, who clung around him with respect and love. It was a sad task to part from all. Many had been the joyous, genial, affectionate spirits, among whom his life had been lived, and the breath of his in-

most soul had been breathed. Hard it was also to depart from the merry circles, which had been founded in earnest jest, and sensible nonsense;—the association of the "Musical Weaver (Weber) 'Prentices," of which he was the leading spirit; or the band of "Musical Cossacks," of which he was the recognised chief, and to which he afterwards addressed humorous "bulletins," "orders of the day," and "warrants of arrest" for the apprehension of deserting members, all conceived in clever parody of such governmental despatches of the period. But the time was to come: it came.

A few days before Weber's departure from Berlin, a festive leave-taking was prepared for him in the house of Justice-Commissary Hellwig, at which his choicest and dearest friends were present. The secret of the fête was carefully kept from him; and great was his surprise when he was received by a chorus, in his honour, parodied from Mozart's "Seraglio." New compositions had been written likewise for the occasion; and a humorous address in verse, in which musical composition was confounded with the art of weaving, in punning allusion to his name, was pleasantly delivered and pleasantly accepted. But, after all, the occasion became too sad for jest. Weber himself could not shake off the deep melancholy which fell upon him at the thought of parting. The brilliant supper had no charms for him. He rose from table, sat down to the piano, and, after a lengthy prelude, in which he sought to recover his self-possession, poured forth a song of gratitude for friendship

and affection—the song afterwards known as "Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden," to words by Tieck—which brought tears into every eye.

The parting from the excellent parents of his friend Mayerbeer cost Weber more than all. In their hospitable house, for more than half a year, he had found a home—a home not only of comfort and luxury, but a home of the heart for the homeless orphan. "This parting has been very painful," wrote Weber himself. "Where can I find such good loving souls again? God bless the dear ones! They tended me as their child."

It was the long-standing invitation of the Duke of Gotha which had determined Weber on this step. After a short delay in Leipsic, where the sale of his overture, "The Ruler of the Spirits," his variations on the air in Mehul's "Joseph," and other pieces, somewhat helped to restore the condition of his still scanty finances, and where his friend Rochlitz gave him new words for a hymn, beginning "In seiner Ordnung schafft der Herr," Weber proceeded on to Gotha. Here he arrived on the 6th September.

The kindly and affectionate nature of the reception of the young composer at the court of Gotha was signally evidenced by a characteristic letter from the Prince Friedrich, who was then taking the waters at Spa for a terrible illness. "Weber will shortly arrive," he writes, in giving his directions; "he is to be lodged in my house: I advised him of this to-day. Let him be received in the most friendly and kindly manner. Let the blue chamber in the corner next

the street be prepared for him, and a piano, which must be hired, placed in the room; pen, ink, and paper, and lights of course; every thing provided for his food. On my return he will daily have a place at my table."

"On my arrival here," wrote Weber to Rochlitz, a few days after his return to Gotha, "I was received by the Duke with affection as well as friendliness. I have a charming room in Prince Friedrich's palace. I have already accompanied the Duke to Reinhartsbrunnen, where I was obliged to set both hands and lungs at work immediately. Now he is off on a journey; and I have time for work by myself. I have not spoken to him yet of my future plans. In the first place, I don't want to take him at once by the throat; and secondly, he seems to have an awful desire to keep me here."

Spite of the amiable friendliness of the Duke of Gotha and his wife, a princess of Hesse Homburg, Weber's intercourse with this potentate was not of a nature to be congenial to an artistic spirit conscious of its own settled purpose, and desirous of pursuing its own vital ends and aims. He felt like a noble steed, who has an unsteady rider on his back, now pulling him to the right, now to the left, now urging him on, now checking his career, always fatiguing and distressing him. Genial as was the Duke, his eccentricity was so uncertain, his flow of ideas so variable, and his sudden impulses so ill-regulated, that it was almost impossible to follow him in all his wondrous changes of spirit and thought. His daily

doings resembled the style of his own poems and works of fiction, in which the richness of thought was never fully developed, the highly-coloured ideas trod on each other's heels, plans were confused, and effects unconnected, although all was pervaded by the profoundest feelings and noblest principles. With all the love and respect which his character inspired in those around him, his eccentricities were a torment, especially to well-ordered artistic natures.

Weber, and frequently even the reluctant Spohr, and Methfessel, who was also at Gotha at this period, were obliged to travel with the Duke from one place of residence to another at a moment's warning, and on any caprice, there to accompany his poems with melodramatic music, and his improvisations by chords on the piano or guitar. Now, the Duke would fancy that a song would tell well as a march: and the required change of instrumentation had to be made on the spot. Now, his own compositions were to be tried with new effects, which sometimes even excited his own derision on their execution. Now, again, the musician was requested to sit and improvise at the piano while the Duke read. On these occasions the tears would sometimes start into the Prince's eyes, and he would overwhelm the artist with his fervent expressions of gratitude.

The daily intercourse with so strange a personage, more especially when a prince, could not but be very trying to a nervous system constituted as was Weber's. The harassing excitement increased, when, a few days after Weber's arrival in Gotha, the Duke

was confined to his chamber by illness, and occupied every body around in the most restless fashion. He never failed, however, to recognise the attentions he exacted, with expressions of gratitude, which were almost affecting. He endeavoured to conciliate by little presents, often of the strangest kind. Now he gave Weber a handsome seal—now an inkstand, a waistcoat, a pair of silk stockings, a cloak. When particularly disposed to show favour, he would bestow on the artist, out of his extraordinarily valuable collection of antiquities and curiosities, a little ring, or some object of the kind, which had scarcely any worth except for a museum.

With Prince Friedrich, the intercourse of Weber's daily life was wholly different, but scarcely less worrying. The Prince, who was a devoted admirer of Italian music and a good singer himself, was never weary of going through the scores of Italian operas, with De Cesaris, the teacher he had brought with him from Italy, surrounded by all the male and female singers and musicians of the operatic troop. On such occasions Weber was obliged to sit half the day at the piano. It is true that he thus made acquaintance with a mass of excellent Italian music, the study of which could not be otherwise than advantageous to him; but the gain, thus acquired, could have borne no proportion whatever to his sacrifice of precious time and trouble. During an entire month at Gotha, instead of enjoying the relaxation, he had fondly hoped to find, when he accepted the Duke's invitation, he experienced only prostration of mind and body.

No wonder then, that, in all his letters of the period, he should have yearned, with somewhat bitter feelings, for the more sober intellectual life of the last months at Berlin, as well as for the bright inspiriting influence of the friends he had left. "I can only preserve my wonted cheerfulness," he wrote to Lichtenstein, "by the constant indulgence of a pleasant dream, that I am not severed from you all, but that I am only on a ramble, and must soon be home again. But still I feel myself growing more grave, spite of myself. I will make every effort, however, not to let myself sink too low; all the more as I have here no tuning-key to tone me up again, except my own good spirits." "The Duke is very kind," he wrote again, "and shows his care and thought for me, even in the smallest matters, in a way that does my heart good. But he is away now for a week; and I can find time for work, which, with heaven's help, I shall employ industriously: I have much, very much to do. The quiet of this place is almost the stillness of death: but it is soothing, and just now to me indispensable."

Spite of the harassing excitement, however, which was so wearing to the young composer, there were many elements of musical cultivation in Gotha, which could not fail to exercise a material influence upon the general extension of Weber's genius. Artists of distinction and talent were assembled there in abundant store. Among these he may be said to have derived the most durable and deepest impression from his artistic intercourse with Spohr, whose "Last Judgment" he read through and studied under the

composer's own eye. Methfessel may have left some traces also. Nor can his constant close connexion with De Cesaris have been without importance on his gradual development. Through the latter he became better acquainted with Italian operatic music, comprehended more clearly the working and result of its effects, and found a little treasure of fresh hints and new ideas. Weber was not the man to disdain to learn the "art of fence" even from his enemies.

During Weber's sojourn in Gotha, he had few opportunities of displaying his remarkable talents in public. The two best occasions were afforded by two concerts given in the Margaret Church in Gotha, on the 29th and 30th of September. At each, however, an untoward accident disturbed the pleasure and harmony of the performance. During the first, the new strings of the instrument on which Spohr's wife, Dorette, the most celebrated harpist of her time, was playing a sonata for harp and violin with her husband, gave way—a pedal stuck—and the lady was so upset, that her piece could not come to its conclusion. During the second, Weber found the piano on which he was to play his own variations on the air in Mehul's "Joseph," so completely out of tune that play, patience, temper, all, fell into marvellous discord. Two concerts, however, in which Weber cooperated, were given at court, on the occasions of the Duke's and Prince Friedrich's birth-days, the 2d and 28th November. The second especially remained long impressed upon the memory of the court society of Gotha. Never, perhaps, did Weber create a

greater excitement than by his wonderful improvisation on this occasion. The Duchess had given him the minuet out of "Don Juan" as a subject, to which the Duke had added two other motives as heterogeneous as possible in character, in order to increase his difficulties, laughingly saying, "I think I have tamed the young lion now." But Weber's spirits were high that evening. Difficulties were feathers to him in his brilliant state of mind; and he dashed into his task, as if borne upon an irresistible torrent of artistic power. Now varying each theme severally, now weaving all the three together, until they formed a new and enchanting melody apart, now bursting into a rapturous jubilee of harmonies, he carried all hearers away on the powerful wings of his own inspiration. He was implored to write down this marvellous performance: but he resisted every entreaty, as he always did on such occasions. The spirit of improvisation had soared to the heavens, and could be recalled no more. The usually cold temperature of courtly parties had been so fevered by this wonderful exhibition, that it was impossible to cool down. Until late in the night, on this one and most special occasion, was the whole court society spell-bound by unwearied efforts in music and song. When in the small hours of the morning Weber and Spohr were returning home, with somewhat flagging spirits, they came upon the barracks, where some Spanish soldiers, who were in garrison there during the war, were singing some of their national songs. The two musicians were surprised by the profound

originality of these melodies; and, tired as they were, regardless of the cold night-air, they remained leaning against the barrack-walls entranced for two long hours, sucking in with delight this new source of inspiration. Weber is said to have been heard, about this time, humming melodies, which afterwards found a form in his "Preciosa."

During the period of his sojourn at Gotha, towards the end of October, Weber went over to Weimar for a few days at the particular request of the grand Duchess, Maria Paulowna, who was very desirous of hearing him play his last compositions for the piano, and more especially the sonata which he had dedicated to her, as well as of taking a few lessons from him. Here again the young composer came into contact with the illustrious poet Göthe. This time the great man appears to have met the rising artist with somewhat more civility, although without creating a much more favourable impression on the young man's mind. "I have again been fortunate enough to be in Göthe's society," he afterwards wrote to Lichtenstein. "He went off today to Jena, where he is employed in writing the third part of his biography, not finding sufficient repose for the purpose here. There is something strange in the nearer communion with such great spirits. These personages ought always to be looked and wondered at from a distance!" With Wieland it was again far different. The amiable old poet received Weber with cordiality once more, begged him to play again to the "old man," and sat in rapturous delight to

hear an improvisation, into which Weber interwove that brilliant crescendo, which afterwards became so celebrated in his performances. The impression made upon this prince of poets was evidently powerful and vivid. Seated at first in quiet enjoyment, he raised himself up, as note after note increased in vigour, rose from his chair, as if lifted up by an irresistible magnetic power, and stood aloft trembling with excitement, until, as the music ceased, he fell back as if exhausted, and burst into tears. Overwhelmed with compliments and praises, and with a brilliant and very valuable ring upon his finger, Weber had taken leave of his amiable patroness the Grand Duchess, and returned once more to Gotha.

It is patent from every source of information, that, during the whole period of his sojourn at the Thuringian courts, the feeling uppermost in the young composer's mind was that, spite all the kindness and distinction showered upon him by these enlightened personages of rank, he was squandering precious time to little purpose. This complaint was all the more bitter in him, as Gotha, but for the circumstances which surrounded him, seemed to be of all places the place, in its homeishness and quiet, to inspire him to incessant production; and, in truth, during these three months the results of his creative powers were very small. Only two works of any importance were produced by him. The one was the already mentioned hymn by Rochlitz. This composition was undoubtedly one of Weber's weakest creations; it bears the unmistakable stamp of great

labour, but without any genial flow of musical ideas. He had evidently forced his talent throughout in order to do honour to the author of the words, whose good-will he was anxious to obtain, but without finding his task a labour of love. After many laborious changes he contrived to complete the little work on the 18th November; and he sent it off to Leipsic as a sort of new-year's souvenir to Rochlitz. The other composition was of far greater worth. This was his original and highly artistic pianoforte concerto in E, a composition distinguished alike by its invention, arrangement, and execution. But even this piece bears evident traces of hothouse forcing, and lacks the spontaneous fire and brilliancy which gave such genial warmth to his earlier productions of the same kind. Of his minor compositions written at Gotha, the most notable are a tenor air with double chorus, in Italian style, undertaken at the request of Prince Friedrich, and sung at the court concerts, six waltzes, and a charming new duet for his "Abu Hassan," added for a little representation of the work at a private theatre.

But whilst Weber's musical production had been thus crushed to a great degree by the reckless exercise of his genius on fugitive fancies to please the variable and excitable Duke, his literary abilities had been greatly developed, as well in quality as in quantity, under the constant encouragement of his patron. Weber had read some chapters of his proposed work of fiction, "An Artist's Wanderings," to the Duke, who had been so struck by the originality of the pro-

posed novel both in style and matter, that he had urged the young man to employ himself assiduously on the completion of his labours. He even offered to supply Weber with lyrical pieces of his own to be intercalated in the work. Such an offer it was nigh impossible for Weber to refuse; but he looked forward to the ducal collaboration with intense terror. He knew how ill the Duke's over-coloured and bombastic style would accord with his own simplicity; and he anticipated the patchwork result with disgust. Fortunately other occupations came in the way of the Duke; and the few little poems he afterwards forwarded to Weber have since been lost. Weber's critical notices, however, at this period were numerous and excellent, but never remunerated as musical effusions of such weight and value should have been. One of these articles, upon the mechanical trumpeter invented by his old Munich acquaintance Kaufmann, was connected with a curious anecdote, which Weber treated with a certain degree of romantic mystery, and was wont to allude to, in after years, with a sort of assumed awe. This curious automaton, which excited considerable sensation by its performances on the trumpet, and looked like a diabolically inspired living thing, had one day, as if possessed by a demon, struck its inventor on the skull with its trumpet, stretched him senseless on the ground, and so injured one of his eyes that he remained blind for life.

By the time that December arrived, Weber felt that, in spite of all the kindness lavished upon him by the Duke of Gotha and his family, it could but

prove detrimental to his true artistic career should he prolong a sojourn which had now lasted more than three months. Perhaps the wandering spirit of the artist again exercised too powerful an impulse on him also. But another circumstance determined him in his intention, by rendering an increase of pecuniary resources necessary to him. Franz Anton had left many debts behind him. The loving son had but one feeling in this emergency. The honour of his beloved father was to be rescued from all possible obloquy; he recognised the debts as his own. The poor scanty remnants of his purse barely sufficed to reimburse his kind friends at Manheim for the poor old man's funeral expenses. Above all, then, it was necessary to make money, in order as soon as possible to redeem his father's obligations. In Gotha such a hope was futile. He resolved to wander forth again.

At the express and frequently-repeated entreaty of the Duke, he remained on at Gotha until the 19th of December. After a brilliant concert at court, at which all his newest compositions were given, he took leave of Duke August with genuine and heartfelt emotion. It was no parting from a prince who had condescendingly encouraged and aided a struggling artist; it was the farewell of an affectionate grateful youth to an elder well-tried friend. Amidst the presents with which Weber was loaded on his departure from the ducal family, the Duke himself, who had heard of the young man's filial piety, placed in his hand, with true delicacy, more substantial proofs of his regard.

After a short stay in Weimar, at the request of the Grand Duchess Maria Paulowna, before whose select little court he was again called upon to play, Weber arrived on the 26th December, in the most bitterly cold weather, at Leipsic, where he had promised to prepare every thing for the performance of his new hymn to the words of Rochlitz, at a concert to be given on new-year's day. The commencement of the year 1813 was not without importance, then, for Weber. The hymn was duly produced, and excited considerable applause. That it was a composition unusually devoid of genuine inspiration has already been mentioned. But for the young composer it may be said that the words of Rochlitz were singularly incoherent, and far inferior in flow of ideas to the same author's "First Tone," and that the sphere was one scarcely suited to Weber's natural and peculiar talent. But the work was given well, upon the whole. The celebrated singer Albertine Campagnuoli, who was engaged for the solos, was a favourite of the public, and sure to command applause. Unfortunately in the final chorus she sang so flat, that, as Weber notes in his diary, the cold sweat of terror burst forth all over him. Many pieces, however, excited the liveliest admiration; and, what was still more precious to the artist, the professional musicians spoke so unreservedly and genuinely of the profound musical science displayed in the work, that the composer's heart received the truest satisfaction. At the same concert Weber's newest pianoforte piece in E, composed in Gotha and Weimar, excited the warmest enthusiasm.

In Leipsic, Weber was able to dispose of his overture to "Rubezahl," and other pieces, to Kühnel the publisher. With an addition of 88 thalers to his purse, he once more took up his wanderer's staff to step forward on his further progress in that journey which had been the main object of all his most cherished plans. Italy, Switzerland, and France were now included in his project. Two years, as he dreamed, lay before him, in which all might be done to complete his artistic development, much for the furtherance of his fame. This journey he looked forward to as the glittering summit of the existence of his fancy.

PART II.

WEBER'S YEARS OF BONDAGE.

1813-1817.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONDUCTORSHIP AT PRAGUE.

PRAGUE, which was to be the first step in Weber's journey, was reached on the 12th January 1813. Here he was received by his good friend Gänsbacher with the news that Wentzell Müller, the musical director of the Prague theatre, had just resigned his appointment, to the great satisfaction of the public as well as his own, and that Liebich, the manager, was desirous of placing the vacant appointment in his hands, in order to have the advantage of his young blood in the desired new constitution and thorough regeneration of the operatic establishment. This intelligence took Weber wholly by surprise, and plunged him into a sea of doubts. On the one hand lay his dearly cherished plans of travel, which were to bring him name and fame; on the other, an assured and honourable position, in which he would be able to exercise all his energies and abilities to the furtherance of the best interests of art. The decision was no easy one. Gänsbacher dragged him almost by force to the houses of the great patrons of the theatre,

Prince Isidor Lobkowitz, Burgrave Colowrat Liebsteinsky, Count Clam Gallas, and the rich banker Kleinwächter. All these highly influential personages pressed acceptance of the offer upon him, with the most flattering assurances of their desire to retain him in their midst. The incense of the homage, thus lavished on him, began to mount to the young artist's brain. But he still remained undecided. Then Gänsbacher carried him off to the manager, with the laughing assurance that "no one could ever refuse Papa Liebich what he asked." And so it was. Liebich was irresistible. This talented actor, and amiable man, whose acquaintance Weber had already made, with so much pleasure, when last at Prague, whose management was unparalleled in the history of theatres for its honourable conduct as well as its astuteness, and whose friendly and fatherly care for all the members of his company was patriarchal in its beneficent nature, exercised an indescribable influence over all who approached him, as well among the members of the aristocracy, who were proud to be guests in his hospitable house, as among the "children" of his troop, who nicknamed him "Papa." Gänsbacher was right. In Liebich's presence Weber could not say "No." In a few words the spell was worked; and Carl Maria had accepted the musical directorship of the opera of Prague, with perfect liberty to make what arrangements he chose in the reorganisation of the operatic establishment, a salary of 2000 florins Viennese, a benefit guaranteed at 1000 florins more, and leave of absence for three months

each year. The right road to take on his path of duty had decided him. "I find it very difficult," he noted in his diary, "to renounce my darling plans of travel; but in order to have the delight of paying all my debts, as an honourable fellow, what would I not do?"

Liebich insisted upon the payment of his salary commencing from that day. At Easter the opera company was to be disbanded; during the summer it was to be reorganised by the new musical director; and in September the operatic representations were to recommence. Journeys in search of fresh artists were meanwhile to be undertaken by Weber. But above all it was his desire to study first his new field of action in all its various bearings. Being obliged to form a household of his own for an indefinite time in Prague, Weber began to revel in the new feeling that he had now a home. With that scrupulous care which characterised him more and more as years advanced, he sought himself out a dwelling, regulated all his domestic expenses with almost pedantic accuracy, bought all his little necessary requirements himself with a strange sense of almost childish joy, and felt, for the first time, like a bird that built its comfortable nest. The wandering artist now dreamed that he had at last found that aspiration of long time—a home! In a brief space of time he certainly felt himself "at home" in the various circles to which he was introduced, and to which his talent and his amiability soon rendered him dear. In the house of Count Pachta, as well as in the families of the noble-

men already mentioned, and many others, he was at once received on the most agreeable footing. His practised artist-eye scanned as speedily the general picture afforded by the state of musical cultivation at that time existing among the public of Prague.

No people in the world, perhaps, was endowed with better musical dispositions than the Bohemians; and this natural talent had been developed, for nearly a century and a half, by the peculiar tendency of the national education. Instruction in music and singing had been made, as early as the seventeenth century, a fundamental portion of popular education, even in humble village-schools; so much so that, in common parlance, schoolmasters were generally termed "Cantores." There was not a school therefore throughout the country that could not afford abundant material for choristers, whether for the churches, the conventual establishments with which the land abounded, or the many private choirs of the aristocratic families. No establishment among the wealthy Bohemian nobles, who were themselves musicians of no ordinary stamp, was considered complete unless it could afford the best of music for the delectation of the guests. Musical acquirements were considered in the choice and remuneration of domestics; and a visitor in a Bohemian family might see the man-cook appear as violinist, the jäger as horn-players, the footmen as executants on the flute, while the steward would take his place as capellmeister, and the master of the house would play "second" perhaps to his own valet. It would not, indeed, be too much to affirm that this

general taste for music, which pervaded a whole people from the highest to the lowest, in a sort of artistic democracy, and seemed to have become a portion of its very flesh and blood, founded, as it was, upon the best school of old classical church-music, was the very soil from which the rich harvest of the many admirable works, belonging to the period of classical chamber-music, had sprung up. Under such circumstances, then, the musical public of Prague had received an education which enabled it to contest with Vienna the first rank in the connoisseurship of the time. It had even won an important victory over its rival by its earlier recognition of the great genius of Mozart. To the Bohemian aristocracy, at the same time, was owing the establishment of the two great musical institutes of Prague, which flourished in the midst of many other minor undertakings — the theatre and the conservatorium. The former had been built by Count Nostitz-Rhineck, and subsequently sold by him to a committee of noblemen, who had made it into a "national theatre." The latter, due to the idea of Count Pachta, was founded and supported by a company of the leading nobles of Bohemia.

At the period of Weber's arrival in Prague, opera was evidently in a state of decline, however. Liebich, able director as he was, had obviously erred in his appointment of Wentzel Müller as capellmeister. It was one which neither satisfied the taste of the public, nor the requirements of the orchestra; and it was the consciousness of this evident failure which

had induced Liebich to determine upon a complete dissolution of the old operatic establishment, and the reorganisation of a new one. But Weber found other influences also at work in bringing about a general depreciation of public taste. The long war had greatly undermined the means, and weakened the artistic activity of the once wealthy and zealous aristocracy of Bohemia. The political fermentation of the times had sundered ranks and nationalities, and split up society into small factions and coteries. General sociability and common feeling upon artistic matters had almost come to a stand-still. The general public, although yet jealous of its reputation of having given the tone to the musical world of Germany, had grown cold and uncertain in its judgments. The rapid appreciation of this state of things which Weber formed, when thus suddenly called upon to create a new operatic establishment, filled him with considerable alarm. He felt that the difficulties with which he had to contend were enormous. But, with a firm reliance upon the support lavishly promised him, the evident sympathy of public opinion in his favour, the unlimited powers placed in his hands by Liebich, and his own knowledge of stage requirements, he resolved to persevere.

In the midst of his anxious preparations for his new career, and the arrangements for a concert which he desired to give, Weber found, however, time and thought for various new compositions. His national song, "Frage nur immer, fragest umsonst," his "Sagt mir an, was schmunzelt Ihr," one of the

most original of his Lieder, to words by Voss, and other pieces of the kind, all belong to this period; and in spite of all his pre-occupations, he even listened to the entreaties of his old friend Brandt, the bassoon player from Munich, to compose a piece for his instrument, and produced the "Rondo Ongarese," which has since been in constant request among all the performers on the bassoon.

That Weber was fully conscious, nevertheless, of the importance of the task which lay before him, was clearly evidenced by his answer to a letter from Rochlitz, entreating him never to lose sight of the truest interests of art in his new position. "My will and purpose," he wrote, "are fully in consonance with your own kind advice. . . . Never!—and I lay my hand solemnly on my heart as I say it,—never shall the confidence placed in me be misused for unworthy purposes. Should I ever appear to you to be swerving from the true path of art, hold up these lines before me to my shame. They are a sacred contract between me and art, which I shall strive to fulfil with all my power to my last breath."

Weber's concert, which took place on the 6th of March, was one of the most brilliant known for many a long day past, and brought him in the sum of 609 florins. Several of his own compositions were given on this occasion, and both artists and band coöperated with a zeal and fire which gave him the best hopes for his future direction of their forces. "I have adversaries in plenty, I find," he wrote to

Rochlitz, relative to the result of his concert. "But these good gentlemen give me but little uneasiness; and I continue to pursue my way in peace. If I find any truth in the sharp criticisms I receive, I mark it in the tablets of my brain, and let all the rest go to the winds. Some call my music 'mystical;' others accuse me of only producing my own compositions; others again sneer at my appointment here. So be it! My whole life through I have owed much to hostility, inasmuch as it has always been my best spur to excellence."

One of the first consequences of Weber's new position was the necessity of a journey to Vienna to hunt up the best artists open for engagements, either as singers or instrumentalists, for the operatic establishment to be formed at Prague. Liebich's confidence in his talent as director was evidenced by the written full powers placed in his hand, to judge and engage what artists he pleased, and to sign contracts at his own discretion, without any further reference to the higher powers. By a strange coincidence, which seemed like a special intervention of the hand of Providence, Weber, when actually on the point of departing for Vienna, received a letter from Caroline Brandt informing him that she was just then without an engagement. The new capellmeister remembered with pleasure the admirable performance of "Sylvana" by this highly-talented young singer and actress, and he determined at once on securing her for the Prague theatre; little foreseeing how that one act would determine the main direction of his

own destiny. Weber's future wife was literally the very first individual whom he engaged for his new operatic company.

In Vienna, for which place he started on the 27th March, Weber found many friends dear to his loving heart, and met other personages destined to exercise a considerable influence upon his future life. "Papa Vogler" was there, again possessed of the demon of restless wandering, and "Brother Bärmann" giving concerts with distinguished success, and also the long-lost "Little Bear," now nineteen years of age, who was residing in Vienna in order to study Hummel's style of playing. Mayerbeer at this period was at variance with the members of the "Harmonic Society;" and as Weber could not be brought to approve what had passed, the relations of brotherly friendship between the two were sadly disturbed. "There is no getting on with Beer," wrote Carl Maria to Gottfried Weber. "I met him with the old heartiness and affection; nor did he say a single word about any misunderstanding: but my old trust in him is gone. Bärmann, and Vogler more especially, both complain that his pride and susceptibility are such as to repel every one from him." In the musical and literary circles of Vienna, at the same time, Weber found himself at once at home; his easy pleasant manners found access everywhere, and everywhere secured appreciation. In the house of Castelli, the author, he met a society wholly congenial to his nature; amidst which, jest was mingled with earnest talk. Here every one supped at his

ease, sending to a neighbouring tavern for his food, and paying his own score. Theodor Körner, with whose name that of Weber was afterwards to be so intimately associated, had been one of this distinguished circle; but he had left Vienna but a short time before Weber's arrival. It is a strange circumstance that the two men were never destined to meet. Better, perhaps, it was that it should have been so. In all probability no sympathy would have existed between the melancholy sentimental poet and the joyous-natured practical composer. Weber loved society, and mingled in it freely at Vienna. The sociability of the Austrian capital had lost but little of its magic charm through the evil influences of the war, and still found a home, thoroughly enjoyed by Weber, in the houses of the bankers Arnstein and Eskeles, and of Counts Hennikstein, Dietrichstein, and Palffy. The last-mentioned nobleman, enthusiastically devoted to the drama in every form, was then the director of the three great theatres of Vienna. He conceived an extraordinary affection for Weber, and gave him undisguisedly to understand that he was sorry he had not engaged him as capellmeister in the place of Spohr, who had lately been appointed to the Theater an der Wien.

But, meanwhile, Weber was industriously employing his time. He made visits on business, or received them from artists; heard and tested singers, instrumentalists, and choristers; and pursued his own practical studies at the theatres. His theatrical connexion brought him into contact with the famous

balletmaster Duport, who afterwards rendered him such signal service in the production of his "Euryanthe." Now, too, he first met Mayseder, of whose talent he became a great admirer; also young Moscheles; Hummel, whose style he thought "correct and hard;" and many other musical men of note. With Salieri, spite all Vogler's efforts, he would never form any friendship. Popular report had most unjustly connected this composer with the cause of Mozart's death. Doubtless Weber never believed the cruel tale. But for him it sufficed that Salieri was known to have hated the beloved master; and his determination was simply expressed by "No; I will have nothing to do with him."

Generally speaking, Weber's journey to Vienna was unproductive of those fruitful results, which both he and Liebich had anticipated, as regarded the engagement of first-rate singers and instrumentalists. On the other hand, it had been of great service in enabling him to form a practical repertoire of operas, by his constant study of all the works of every kind then being performed at the theatres, and to have their scores copied and collected. All this administrative business, however, did not prevent the active artist from arranging a concert of his own, which took place as a morning performance in the Redoubten-Saal. What was very unusual, and indeed unprecedented, his improvisation, so wont to rouse enthusiasm, failed to please the critics so much as any other part of the performance on this occasion. His play wanted neatness and precision, they said, and

was inferior to that of such pianists as Moscheles and Hummel. But indisposition had laid hold on Weber previously to the concert. During the morning he had needed all his courage to bear up against the insidious enemy. When all was over he had sunk altogether. Without leave-taking, or terminating his affairs, he hurried as fast as he could back to Prague. He could scarcely reach his home: he was raving in a bilious fever.

Weber was now sick to death; but a providence watched over him. By a fortunate chance Count Pachta, who was ignorant of his illness, came to see him, and found him lying, without proper attendance, senseless on his bed. The kind nobleman ran from the house, procured a litter, and had him borne to his own mansion. Here all the resources of the wealthy and luxurious household were placed at the disposal of the suffering man. When, after three weeks, during a portion of which Weber had lain between life and death, he was allowed once more to enjoy the sweet spring air, the Count's carriage, for a great length of time, daily bore the convalescent Weber to the beautiful new park of Bubentsch, or through the charming country around Prague. Nor was this looked upon by the amiable nobleman as any act of charity; to him it seemed but the duty of the worshipper of art towards the artist.

It was long before Weber could resume the administrative duties of his post. His first efforts were made in the regulation of the service of the orchestra, and a general ordinance relative to the business of

those immediately connected with the stage. His intention was, although the newly-organised opera was not to commence until September, to prepare beforehand such a strict system of order, that all the regulations might be in full swing before the entrance of the new members of the company on their respective functions. These innovations naturally excited such a storm of disapproval and opposition among the remaining members of the company, that the new capellmeister found himself obliged, in order to carry out his praiseworthy object, to dismiss a far greater portion of the troop than had been originally intended, and to hasten the arrival of Franz Clement, the new leader of the orchestra. This artist Weber had engaged in Vienna, where his colossal musical memory, which on one occasion had enabled him to write a pianoforte arrangement of the whole of Haydn's "Seasons" from recollection, had excited the young musician's astonishment and admiration.

Still weak from recent illness, the conscientious young capellmeister, who was resolved to employ all the energies of his character in the right course, was nigh driven to desperation. "The orchestra is in complete rebellion," he wrote to Gottfried Weber; "and in the midst of all this worry, I have to correspond with all the new members to be engaged; to draw up their contracts; to bring the confused library in order, and write a catalogue; to correct scores; to prepare the scenarii of the operas first to be produced; to describe scenery to the painters, costumes to the costumiers. And then, one is never

left a moment in peace from the influx of people. I ought to go to Eger for the restoration of my health; but the press of business is so great that any thought of the kind is impossible. I get up at six o'clock, and am often at work until midnight. How happy shall I be when the great machine is at last put in movement!—then I shall feel that the victory is more than half won."

Prague, meanwhile, was assuming an entirely new physiognomy about this period. Fugitives from the scenes of war in Saxony and Prussia; statesmen and politicians, desirous of observing the course of events as near as possible; and, finally, all the personages more or less connected with the Peace Congress, an attempt to establish which was made in Prague—streamed into the Bohemian capital. The Emperor of Austria had taken up his residence at Brandeis, in the immediate neighbourhood; and the Saxon Court had sought a refuge in the city, but lived in retirement in the Burg. Prague, generally so quiet, not to say stagnant, in its outward aspect, was now teeming with life. Equipages hurrying hither and thither from balls, dinners, and visitings, brilliant uniforms, gay dresses, and sparkling orders, dashed along the streets, in "most admired disorder." Innocuous swords clashed with far from innocuous pens. Prague had become the swarming ant-hill of statesmen, diplomatists, political literati, and all their countless hangers-on—the focus of all hopes, fears, and conjectures.

It is one of the strangest turns in Weber's de-

stiny, that the world, misled by his well-known compositions of the period of the War of Liberation, should have given him the reputation of being a great political fanatic, enthusiastic for the cause of freedom and the independence of peoples. In truth, although his hatred of the French invaders, which had almost maddened him during his residence in Silesia, was always predominant in his character, he associated himself in no way with the political fermentation of the times. No one known expression from his mouth, no remark in his letters, no sentence in his day-book, would lead to the supposition that he took any more active interest in the fluctuations of the great national struggle, than was ordinarily taken by public opinion. With the greater portion of the political notabilities, who had come to Prague to hold a consultation over the sick bed of Europe, and devise, as doctors, the proper medicine for her cure, Weber had but little community of feeling. But with other individuals, whom the same occasion had more or less brought together, and who may be looked upon as playing not unimportant parts in the drama of his life, he was speedily in constant intercourse. In the house of Count Colowrat he made acquaintance with men of eminent talent and distinction, such as Niebuhr, Humboldt, Stein, and Schwartzenberg. But there were three personages, who more especially exercised a material influence on the formation of his character in different ways.

The one was the poet Ludwig Tieck, whom

Weber had already met at Baden-Baden in the year 1810, and who, after a mysterious adventure in a small suburb theatre in Munich, had all at once sunk from a strong, handsome man of energetic and fiery disposition into a weak, helpless, complaining sufferer; and, although Tieck's views, as regarded the vocation and working of the stage, were diametrically opposed to those of Weber, yet the profundity, learning, and intellectual weight of the great poet's judgment considerably contributed to a solid modification of the young composer's ultra-romantic tendencies. Then came Ludwig Robert, the talented brother of the talented and celebrated Rahel; sharp, sarcastic, epigrammatic, and realistic in his tendencies, who, by his keen perception and his logical precision, held the romantic school, to which he belonged, from soaring into illimitable space. The third was Clemens Brentano, an author, whose extraordinary character bordered on caricature. Tieck used to say of this singular man, that Brentano was "the most charming liar of his day," and reminded him of the comic personages of the old Italian comedy. In truth, nothing could be more enchanting in its effect, than the power of "improvisation," as Clemens Brentano himself called it—of "lying," as others would have it—which he employed on all occasions: he had been known to tell the same tale three times over, confessing each time that the previous version was a lie, with such a fascination as to make each in turn appear the solemn truth. His imagination took the strangest flights; his turns of thought were as sin-

gular as unexpected; his conversation, sparkling with wit, was irresistible. No wonder, then, that Weber should have been captivated, for a time at least, by the brilliant, amiable poet. His intercourse with the three talented celebrities was almost daily —now in Liebich's hospitable house—now over a bottle of Upper-Austrian wine in one of the better hostelries of Prague: and there can be no doubt that the influence it worked upon his disposition and his views, especially when his intellectual capacities were not occupied upon musical production, must have been as permanent as it was great. His tendencies could not but have been affected, in one way or the other, by men of mark, who aspired, each in his own sphere of literature, to raise aloft that banner of the romantic school, which he himself displayed in music. In the great contest fought under this flag, music, however, was more fortunate than poetry. It has been truly said, "What the romantic poets ambitioned to do, and could not, Weber willed to do, and did."

Meanwhile, as the summer was going by, the heavy administrative business of his new position, only feebly depicted in his letter to Gottfried Weber, kept the young capellmeister in constant and fatiguing occupation. But to these labours he felt himself compelled to add another. Under his direction were many Bohemian officials, who conversed amongst themselves in the Slavonic tongue. Weber was, throughout life, susceptible, and somewhat given to mistrust. He fancied that intrigues against him

were going on before his very face. He had neither the right nor the desire to forbid the use of the Bohemian language among these people; so, in this dilemma, he adopted the resolution to study Bohemian himself. The task was a hard one, and needed all his firm will and energy of character to carry through; but he set himself to it with so much industry and zeal, that, in a few months, no one could venture to speak in his presence words that he should not hear.

On the 12th August, when the new operatic company was nearly completed and assembled, Weber began the rehearsals of Spontini's "Cortez," the first opera he intended for representation in the repertoire which he projected, with the hopes of giving two new operas, of greater or minor importance, every month. His activity was indeed astounding. Not only was he the musical director of the establishment, but, in practice, director of the orchestra, stage-manager, repetiteur of all the artists, ay even copyist of the music, scene-painter, and costume superintendent, all in one!

In spite of all these exertions, no event of any moment might have been said to have occurred to mark the even tenor of Weber's life, had not fate determined that one personage should be thrown in his way, who was to play an important part in his career. Among the troop now assembled at the theatre was a dancer, by name Brunetti, married for many years past to a woman, who, from the ballet, had risen to the operatic stage, where she sang the

lighter parts with considerable success. She was the mother of several children, but still possessed a considerable charm in her fine plump figure and her beautiful blue eyes. She was as full of the absurdest tricks and caprices as she was lively and impetuous in temperament; and that her reputation of being a mistress of all the finest arts of coquetry did not belie her, Weber had soon to learn to his cost. Therese Brunetti was fond of attending the operatic rehearsals, even when not herself employed. On these occasions Weber was frequently thrown in her way; and he soon conceived for the handsome seductive woman a passion, which seemed to have deprived his otherwise clear mind of all common sense and reason, and which neither the flood of administrative affairs nor the cold breath of duty could extinguish. Vain were all his efforts to conceal it. In a very short time it became the topic of general remark; excited the ridicule or grave anxieties of his friends; involved him in a thousand disagreeable positions; robbed him of the most precious treasures of a heart rich in love; lowered his moral character, without the slightest compensating advantage to his artistic career; and nigh dragged him down into an abyss beyond hope of rescue.

The new opera-director was soon lodged in the house of the careless husband of the light woman. She herself may have had some inclination for a man who, in spite of his insignificant personal appearance, was always known to exercise a peculiar charm over women; she may have been flattered

also by the preference of the genial young capellmeister. But as soon as she felt her true power over him, she held out her fair hand only to lead him into a life of torment, now seeming to offer him a paradise of requited love, now dragging him through a purgatory of doubt into a very hell of jealousy. The contrast between the ardent, self-sacrificing affection of his honest heart, and the cat-like art with which she knew how to "worry" every poor outraged feeling beneath her cruel paws, was as affecting as it was painful.

The woman's power over her poor victim was immense. He was dragged in her train, against his better reason, to country excursions, suppers, balls, at which, whilst he watched her every look, her every breath, to discover her slightest wish, although nigh dead with fatigue, she would be bestowing her attention on other men, wholly regardless of her slave. Now, again, he would scour the town, in scorching heat or drenching rain, frequently sacrificing the only moments he could snatch from business for his dinner, to procure a ribbon, a ring, or some dainty, which she desired, and which was difficult to obtain; and on his return she would receive him perhaps with coldness and toss the prize aside. Sometimes, when the proof became too evident that she had duped, deceived, betrayed him, the scenes between the two were fearful; and then she would cleverly find means of asserting that it was she who had the best right to be jealous, and thus turn the tables on him. By every thought, in every action, in every moment of

his life, there was but one feeling ever present—"How will *she* receive me?"

Even in his account-book, now so often neglected, are to be found the lamentations of his despairing heart over her unworthiness; and then again, but a few hours later, expressions of delight that she had smiled on him. There is something terrible in the bitter slavery to which his better nature was condemned by this wild passion. One day he writes: "A fearful scene. . . . The sweetest dream of my life is over. Confidence is lost for ever. The chain is broken." On the next: "A painful explanation. I shed the first tears my grief has wrung from me. . . . This reconciliation has cleared the thunder from the air. Both of us felt better." And then again: "She does not love me. If she did, could she speak of her first-love and all its cherished feelings with so much delight? Could she be so pitiless? No! my dream is over! I shall never know the happiness of being loved. I must for ever be alone! . . . She can sit near me, hours long, and never say one word; and when some other man is mentioned, burst out in ecstasy. I will do all I can to please her; but I must withdraw within myself, bury all my bitter feelings in my own heart, and work—work—work!" Again, in a few days afterwards, he writes: "She was so good and dear that all was forgiven and forgotten." But this does not last; soon comes the entry: "Calina came; and she went out with him, without one word of kindness or sympathy for me. I accompanied them a portion of the way, and then

went back to give a lesson to Resi. She does not think of me, while I am only thinking of her pleasure." The "Resi" here mentioned was Brunetti's daughter Therese, then twelve years of age. The mother had once casually said, she would like the child to have instruction in music. This was enough for Weber. Every hour he could steal he had given in secret to Resi's musical education; and he had so far succeeded with the clever child, that, on the mother's birthday, he had the delight of producing her talent. "I could not sleep for the thought," wrote Weber, on this occasion: "after breakfast Resi played. Her delight was great. My object had been attained; and I was happy. Is it possible she cannot now know how much I love her?" Blameful and illegitimate as Weber's passion may have been, there is a noble self-abnegation and purity of purpose in this one deed, that might open the severest hearts to charity for the misguided man.

It is remarkable, at the same time, that Weber was never led astray from his artistic duties, and all the thousand complications of business they involved, by this disastrous passion. Deficiencies still existed in the working of the operatic company, and principally in the composition of the female chorus, in which voices had to be ill-supplied by boys. On the 9th September, however, Weber produced the first opera under his direction on the boards of the Prague theatre, the "Cortez" of Spontini. It had been magnificently "got up" by the management. The opera pleased the usually cold and critical public

of Prague; and Weber had the satisfaction of hearing on all sides that "the freshly organised opera did the new capellmeistor the greatest honour." In the midst of expressions of pleasure at his success, however, the poor wounded spirit still wrote to Gänsbacher, "For many a long day, I have never felt so alone as now. Be it as Heaven will! I have still power to endure; and I can plunge into the whirlpool of work to seek oblivion."

That Weber must have worked with unremitting activity, is evidenced by the fact, that he was enabled to produce new operas before his public with a rapidity which excited the astonishment of all, the envy of many. Ten days after "Cortez," followed Catel's "Vorneheme Wirthe;" in another week, Mehul's charming "Joseph and his Brethren," a work dear to Weber's own heart; in yet another week, the brilliantly appointed "Vestale;" a fortnight afterwards, Cherubini's beautiful "Water-carrier;" in equally rapid succession, Cherubini's "Faniska," and Isouard's "Billet de Loterie;" and, when public opinion expressed itself as opposed to such a series of foreign works, Fränzel's "Carlo Fioras," not to the gratification of public opinion, however, which received with freezing coldness this first German opera, produced under Weber's direction. Within ten months the new opera had been thoroughly created afresh; in four months and a half, twenty-one acts of important operatic works had been studied and produced in a manner which not only satisfied the most critical of publics, but the most difficult to be

pleased of all directors. Such was the first produce of Weber's talent in his new position. It may be fairly asked whether it was not as great in its kind as his own musical genius.

The year was not to pass away without bringing Weber into contact with the personage who, above all that had crossed him in his path of life, was destined to exercise the strongest influence upon his whole being as artist or as man. Caroline Brandt arrived in Prague on the 11th December. This charming young singer and actress, introduced by Weber to his manager and patrons, soon won all hearts. Before the year was ended, she was engaged in rehearsals on the stage. On the first January 1814, she made her first appearance on the boards of the Prague theatre as "Aschenbrödel" (Cinderella), a part in which she had carried off, in most of the great capitals of Germany, one of those triumphs won more from the heart than from mere critical judgment. Her exquisite form, her innocently coquettish grace, her sweet supple voice, her stage-tact and her powers of invention, which enabled her to dare much which others would have feared, had richly qualified her for characters combining the expression of real natural feeling with liveliness and animation.

Caroline Brandt, the daughter of the tenor and violinist Brandt, may have been said to have been born upon the stage. At eight years of age she had first appeared as the child in the "Donauweibchen," and from that moment never ceased to enchant the public whenever she appeared. Her education had

been but desultory; but her rapid powers of conception, the plastic facility of her mind, and her natural grace, which so quickly seized on the opportunities offered for its cultivation in the best society, had fully supplied the absence of any more formal and systematic education. Her unchecked hastiness of temper displayed in some degree the want of true fostering care and the strong hand of early discipline; but her innate goodness and tenderness of heart were always ready to overweigh in the balance this little exuberance of temperament. For years she had been led, with her elder brother Louis, from stage to stage, sometimes with sad periods of sorrow and deprivation. In Munich she had obtained the great advantage of being able to study the performances of that eminent artist, Madame Renner; and on her school Caroline had founded her own exquisite style. She was already a formed actress, when, in the year 1810, she had charmed the public of Frankfort, and had been admired and unforgotten by Weber himself in her exquisite impersonation of "Sylvana." Her stage-tact was of the finest order; her sense of grace and beauty in all things infallible. The practical artist was now to find in her a far more useful adviser than in a whole host of æsthetical professors. It was not long after her arrival in Prague, that the quicksighted young composer felt the full value of this influence, and began to look to her consummate taste for counsel.

Caroline Brandt was small and plump in figure, with beautiful expressive gray eyes and fair wavy hair, and a peculiar liveliness in all her movements.

Her first appearance on the stage of Prague at once decided her position in that capital. The honour of a recall before the curtain—an honour in those days seldom bestowed—was awarded to her; and from the first, many of her competitors, among whom was naturally Therese Brunetti, began to look on her askance. This feeling of jealousy was soon increased. When introduced by Weber into the houses of Count Colowrat, Prince Lobkowitz, and others of the first families of Prague, she was welcomed there with the distinction due not only to her great artistic merits and her innate charms, but to the purity and worth of her moral character. Weber was thus thrown greatly in her company. He could not but feel the magic power of so fascinating a woman; he could not but draw comparisons, little by little, between the worthless object of his passion, to whom, by a strange coincidence, Caroline Brandt bore a vague resemblance in fresher, younger form, and this pure, bright, artless creature. Still, during the commencement of the year 1814, no traces are to be found of any diminution of his passion for the coquettish artful Therese Brunetti. He suffered bitterly, it is true, from her deceptions, her sordidness, her infidelities; but his heart yearned for love, and clung with desperation to the rotten plank, on which he had stored all his hopes of requited affection. In the months of January and February there still appear in his note-book such remarks as, "I was very sad; but she was good to me; and I was content." "I found Calina with Therese, and I could scarce conceal the fearful rage

that burned in me." "No joy without her, and yet with her only sorrow!"

But the unworthy bond was at last to be broken; and the release was effected by two comparatively trifling circumstances. The tender lover, on the birthday of the object of his passion, had prepared for her a present, consisting of a gold watch, to which were appended a variety of trinkets, all chosen with symbolical reference to his deep affection. At the same time he had ordered her a dish of oysters—then a rare and costly delicacy in Prague. To the valuable watch the fair Therese paid little heed, still less to the profound meaning of the symbolical trinkets. She flung herself upon the oysters with a gluttony which disgusted the sentimental lover. On a sudden the scales fell from his eyes. The other circumstance was not perhaps so trifling. Weber had long remarked, with all the pangs of the most fearful jealousy, the marked attentions, paid by Therese, to a certain Calina, often alluded to in his notes, a man of substance. Although this affair had become a matter of town-talk and scandal, the infatuated adorer had still followed in the train of the delusive woman, until she herself announced to him, with the utmost coolness, that she had been offered, with her husband, an apartment in Calina's house, and had accepted it. This utter want of delicacy of feeling towards him revolted Weber. For once disdain overmastered passion. Still more irritated was he when he learned the foul advice given by Therese to Caroline Brandt, for whom the banker Kleinwächter showed a prefer-

ence. "Hold him fast," had said the worldly-minded woman; "he is worth the trouble; for he is rich." All this, however, might have failed in opening the eyes of a man so utterly blinded by mad passion, had he not had a little physician by his side, who had the best means of curing his disorder, by the sweetest homœopathic medicaments, which doubtless had already begun to work their spell.

All the earlier portion of the year 1814 found Weber in a painful, almost distracted, state of mind. A struggle was already going on within his heart between a passion battered and ruined but still erect, and a new-born feeling gradually rising into a form of strength and beauty. The duties of his position, at the same time, called for an amount of exertion and activity, for the purpose of rearing the young operatic tree he had planted, and sustaining his own repute, which would alone have sufficed to occupy all his thoughts. No wonder, then, that his powers of production at this period should have sunk to a low ebb. Beyond the beautiful Rondo to his afterwards celebrated Sonata in A, his well-known variations to the air "Schöne Minka," and some other insignificant pieces, there was no exercise of his creative genius. Upon the combat of his own soul, and the over-excitement of harassing labours came now a complete prostration of spirit. The joyous humour of the genial young artist seemed to have fled for ever. "The only real ground of my long and regrettable silence to you," he wrote to Gottfried Weber, "lies in my deep depression. This settled melancholy has

so altered me, that you, my old friend, would scarcely know me now. The causes of all this are various. My health since my illness last year has been always precarious. Moreover, I am alone in the world here, without a trusty friend to whom I can open my heart unreservedly. And thirdly, my position here is that of a man, who slaves in service, not of the free artist, guided by his own inspirations." Not one word does he say here of the real cause of all this "deep depression"—his frantic passion. So, too, in his letters of the earlier part of the year to Lichtenstein. "My state of mind is so strange, that I fear to seat myself at my desk, lest I should communicate my sadness to the friends I love. Properly speaking I have no cause for sadness. I have good clothes to my back; I can eat my fill; people take off their hats to me. I ought to be a happy man, then. How many have less reason to be so! But I am possessed of a devil. Man is the creator of his own happiness or unhappiness, I know; and yet the joyous humour, which runs like quicksilver through every nerve, and makes the spirit soar aloft, is in no man's gift to bestow upon himself."

But, however sick at heart and suffering in body Weber might be, he never failed to bestow both moral and material health and strength upon his operatic establishment. Here, restless and feverish as his activity might be, it was always practical. He produced, in the early portion of the year 1814, as many as ten newly studied operas upon the boards of the Prague theatre, in the space of three months.

Not only on these occasions did he go through every part with each singer individually, and superintend himself every preliminary, partial, or complete rehearsal, but, as has already been seen, took upon himself to direct the stage-business, the groupings, the dances, the scenery, and the costumes. Nor did the unwearying activity, necessary for this immense extent of duty, prevent his general direction of the concerts continually given in support of various charities. In one of these he conducted Haydn's "Creation," with the utmost devotion and zeal, but without success—on another, a cantata by Mascheck on "The Battle of Leipsic," which he himself called "a monster of bad declamation, noise, and triviality, fit only to please the lovers of show"—on another, a patriotic chorus by Salieri, in imitation of Handel's Alexander's Feast, "a work without one spark of true inspiration," which fell flat upon performance.

It may be said, at the same time, that the general rising of the German nation out of the fermenting mass of the countless miserable little German principalities, found but a faint echo in the hearts of the Bohemians. The great national movement of the War of Liberation, so important in all its political and social aspects, had no other character in their eyes than that of a struggle of the glorious army of his Apostolic Majesty and his allies against his Apostolic Majesty's arch-enemy. Their joy went no further than the feeling that their country, thrice bankrupt, and a hundred times duped by false promises, might now be restored by "good Kaiser Franz," and his

great minister Metternich, to its former credit, and all the abominable vexations of the war come to an end. The important interests of mankind, involved in the contest, seem to have been misunderstood or ignored in Prague. The celebration of the victory was confined to a gratis performance at the theatre, which went off without one spark of enthusiasm, except by the singing of the hymn "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser," in which the audience joined; and during which Weber, who, to the surprise of all who knew his ardent nature, had evidenced but little political enthusiasm during all this interesting and critical period, turned round on his conductor's seat, and joined in the general chorus with all his heart and soul, as he himself declared.

It was during this period that Weber's first benefit-night took place. He selected Mozart's "Don Juan" for the evening; and he had it studied in strict conformity to the original intentions of the great composer, to the delight of those who could still remember to have heard the immortal opera in Mozart's own days. It is characteristic of Weber's boundless admiration of Mozart, that, in his desire to produce the opera in its pristine integrity, he for the first time had a difference with his friend Director Liebich. For reasons of economy, the manager desired to suppress the orchestra upon the stage. Weber, on the other hand, insisted on a complete execution of the work, and denounced the proposed "dummy" musicians on the stage as ridiculous and utterly detrimental to the effect. The altercation becoming vio-

lent, Weber declared that he "would rather pay the extra musicians out of his own pocket, than allow one hair of Mozart to be touched." And he kept his word. On his benefit-night the stage-music was paid by himself. Before the second representation, however, Liebich had "thought better of it," and yielded to the ardent advocate of Mozart's honour and fame.

The part of "Don Juan" had been sung, but without any effect, on this occasion by Schröder, the husband of the great tragic actress, Sophia Schröder. This latter eminent artist had been engaged at the Prague theatre, and had come thither, at the commencement of the year, with her three lovely little daughters. Weber was so devoted an admirer of this great woman's genius, that, on the occasion of a performance of the "Medea," which was on the point of being suspended, owing to the sudden indisposition of the prompter, he himself crept into the prompter's box, and once more displayed his consummate knowledge of all practical stage-requirements, by assuming the functions of the missing man. Now, too, he first saw Wilhelmina Schröder, at that time a beautiful little girl, who was trying her theatrical wings in the ballet, but destined to become so celebrated as Madame Schröder-Devrient. It was that very child who was afterwards to embody his part of "Agathe" with such wondrous talent and dramatic fire. Weber's devotion to Mozart brought its blessing with it. His benefit was highly successful, and produced him the sum of 1200 florins Viennese.

But the struggle was still going on in Weber's

heart; and his tone of mind was far from satisfactory. In a letter to Rochlitz of this period, in which he gives an account of his daily labours, he still reveals a mind ill at ease with itself. "From early dawn until ten o'clock," he writes, "I am beset with people who want to speak to me, and am happy if I can snatch a few minutes from my hard dry work. From ten to half-past eleven there is daily a rehearsal. Every other day there is an opera—every day, from year's end to year's end, a performance. Then I have my food given me somewhere or other; for I must see a soul or two sometimes out of the theatre. Then home again for my correspondence, correction of scores, and the thousand other manifold necessities of my life. Then to the theatre, where on "off-nights" I have to give my orders for the following day, and come to an understanding on business matters with the manager. Then—then—I might indeed have a moment for confidential intercourse with a beloved friend; but nothing remains but weariness in my lonely chamber, head and heart-ache, and that eternal wearing feeling that I am alone! How can I work then? Where is the power of creation? . . . There is nothing here in the spirit of the public to inspire to productiveness. Nothing excites its enthusiasm: a deadly chill is thrown by it over all. The masses feel not like masses, as there is no community of sentiment among them all." To this desponding state of mind in Weber, the news of Vogler's death no doubt contributed. The Abbé had died at Darmstadt on the 6th of May. The intelligence had

struck his pupil a heavy blow. All the old composer's egotism and folly were forgotten in his death. Weber remembered only the man whose influence had done so much for the development of his own powers, and who had loved, or had seemed to love, him with a fatherly affection. "I need not attempt to describe to you my grief," he wrote to Gänsbacher. "Peace be to his ashes! He will live for ever in our hearts. I hope he has not dealt carelessly with his works, but made one of us the heir of those he has left. I will endeavour to have the bust, for which we made the pedestal. I cannot write more—my heart is too full."

The time was come, however, when his passion for Therese Brunetti was to be gradually cooled, and his yearning for a purer affection and a home of love was to lead him closer and closer to Caroline Brandt. From day to day she delighted Weber more and more, not only by her talent, but by her never-failing modesty, her amiability towards her jealous fellow-actresses, her respect for art, her readiness in all. Her "Zerlina" in "Don Juan" had completed the charm, which established her in the favour of the public. But she lived retired with her mother, and received no visits. Some of the richer and more distinguished young nobles of the day had sought to try their fortune with the new "star:" but in vain. Not the slightest breath of scandal could assail her. The contrast between this estimable girl and the unworthy Therese Brunetti could not but be more and more strongly impressed on Weber's mind.

The more his heart cooled, the more it thirsted for love. Fortunately the magic fountain spring, at which he now hoped to drink, was the true one to heal his wounded soul.

An opportunity at last occurred, which permitted Weber to enter the lovely girl's quiet home. Whilst talking to Weber on the stage, inserting her little foot in play into the wing-grooves, she had been caught by a scene rapidly shifted, had been thrown down, and considerably injured. The young capellmeister was at last allowed to call and inquire after the results of the accident. The peculiar charm which Caroline knew how to throw over all around her—the charm of homeishness and comfort—struck Weber profoundly. His yearning for a home seemed here to find the embodiment of its ideal. He was touched—affected—and now felt he loved once more—but with a true genuine holy love, such as he had never known before. The souls of the two were destined for each other; and Caroline Brandt soon began to reciprocate the affection of her lover. There was nothing in the positions of the pair to create any obstacle. Under the eyes of Caroline's mother, Weber was allowed to pay his court. Her father and brother, who came to Prague in the month of June, could see no impediment to her union with the young, already celebrated, composer and capellmeister. But the "course of true love" was not to run wholly smooth; a little imp of evil was there to trouble the "sweet waters." Therese Brunetti was too sharp not to discover that a change had come over her quondam adorer, and to divine the

cause; she had not been the woman that she was, had she not hated the new object of the affections of the man, of whom, if she had ever loved him, she was long since heartily weary. From the moment of the discovery, she used every device of artfulness to lure the seceder from her wiles back into the net. The chains were hard to break. Distressing scenes again occurred; and Weber's mind was tossed thither and thither upon the stormiest ocean of doubt. His sleep now wholly forsook him. Distracted as he was by all these struggles of his soul, harassed by the multifarious duties of his position, and without one true friend's heart to which he could pour out all his troubles, no wonder that Weber found his moral and physical powers, both alike, give way. His health broke entirely: and he obtained his leave of absence to repair his shattered forces; the conductorship being meanwhile left in the hands of the able violinist Clement. For the requirements of his bodily health he first sought out the baths of Liebwerda in Friedland: after a course of the waters, he hoped to find a refreshing influence for his jaded mind among old and dear friends in Berlin, Gotha, Weimar, and Leipsic.

Freed from the meshes of the tyrant, his heart was now given to the thought of Caroline Brandt, and her alone. "I am still and quiet here, and find time to write and think," he wrote to Gänsbacher. "You will be surprised to hear that I left Prague, after all, with a heavy heart. But the riddle will be solved, when I tell you, that I have left behind me there a sweet beloved being, who might—who may—

make me happy—for it seems as if she really loved me. Do not fear me. Past experiences have made me clearsighted; and an absence of three months shall now test our loves." His letters to her, whose accepted lover he might now be looked upon to be, were full of warmth, and fire, and true heart's tenderness. Caroline Brandt's hasty temperament was given to jealous doubts, and fears, and wavering uncertainties. The whole affectionate geniality of Weber's nature was now lavished on his efforts to calm or modify these gusts of doubting love. Not a single little circumstance of his daily life was left unrevealed to Caroline. The lover was minute, because every detail of *her* life was dear to his heart. "Every trifle is precious to me," he wrote. "Be open with me. Tell me all. Be assured my heart will sympathise with yours." "Oh my Lina," he answered to expressions of jealous fears on her side, "could you but lie on my breast and look into my eyes! Yet all would not avail, if trust in me is not alive in you." And again, "Can you suppose you possess so little power yourself, or can you love me so little, that you can suppose I can wear any other picture in my heart? . . . Tell a child for ever he is a naughty boy, and he will become one; because, however innocent, he is always branded with a wrong. But I am no child, thank Heaven." Once more: "You love me, you say, as a 'sweet poison,' that is harmful to the soul. I could forgive you this unmerited reproach, were I sure you really loved me." And now again: "God knows I would not give you pain; but I could not help show-

ing you what pain your doubts of my affection have given me." But amidst these little self-tormentings of a loving pair, came also bursts of joy. "I cannot understand my happiness," Weber writes in another letter; "I seem to wander in a dream, where all is flooded by a rosy light: and I must touch myself to be assured that all is possible—is true!" It was the "old, old song,"—sunshine and rain were showered in turn upon love's garden; but the plant still grew, and blossomed, and bore pleasant flowers. And thus Weber's heart was bound for life to her who was to hold the strong man enchained thenceforth with fetters, the pressure of which was only seldom felt.

As may be supposed, the composer's creative genius was wholly quenched now by the more powerful genius stirring up within him. Nothing was done at Liebwerda; and on 31st July he started for Berlin, visiting Friedland, with all its historical associations, by the way.

CHAPTER XIV.

WEBER'S PATRIOTIC COMPOSITIONS.

In Berlin, where Weber arrived on 3d August 1814, he suddenly found himself in an atmosphere of agitation and excitement, pregnant with aspirations and feelings, the vastness and unanimity of which were new to him. The great German rising of 1813 had borne its fruits. The German people, by its own will, its own power, and its own sacrifices, had subdued its great oppressor; and it stood, after its victory, like a young lion that had first felt its strength. In Prague, people had done no more than celebrate the success of the army of his majesty the Emperor Franz over that of his majesty the Emperor Napoleon; they had congratulated in court-dress, and illuminated as in duty bound. But in Berlin men hailed the triumph of a people over its oppressors, of freedom over slavery, of a nation's rights over the wrong of might; they were inspired with enthusiasm at the great deed which had been done. From the ragged urchins in the streets, who swaggered with a military air, to the generals of a people's army, there was but one feeling

in all hearts—the feeling of self-won victory, power, and freedom. In every relation of life, in art, in science, in all, this feeling alone had any importance in the eyes of the masses, and could alone awaken interest or attention. Had men discoursed of history, sacred or profane, of the joys of love, of nature's charms, none would have listened; all softer tones were drowned in shouts of jubilee, and warlike acclamations. The stage had no place for aught but patriotic feats of arms; painting pictured only battle-fields; music breathed only sounds of war, victory, and freedom. Patriotic Berlin could listen to no other musical productions. Almost all the musicians of the time devoted themselves exclusively to patriotic compositions, of which Berlin could never have enough. The last work of Himmel, who died on the 8th May of this year, had been "The War-Songs of Germany." But the true road to the people's heart now was to be gained by musical settings of the patriotic verses of young Körner, the "beloved singer," whose romantic death upon the field at Gadebusch had thrown an unusually brilliant halo over his poetry. Many had been already composed; and in every place, where German men were congregated together with voices in their throats, these songs were sung with love and fervour.

It is a strange trait, at the same time, in German character, that a people conscious and proud of its newly-acquired strength should have identified the cherished return of "good old times," and the acquisition of freedom, with the return of their old sove-

reigns and rulers, however little these princes may have earned their subjects' love, cared for their freedom, or contributed themselves to their own restoration. In Prussia the good qualities of the humbled king were alone remembered and respected; his weaknesses, for the time at least, were forgotten or ignored. It is true that the old hydra of reaction had not yet dared to raise its ugly head, and drive away, as persons suspected and to be crushed, the very men who had bought the freedom of Germany by their own heart's-blood, and whose heroic spirit might still have earned the best weal of people and sovereign alike. Men had not believed so base a consummation possible at such a time.

At the period of Weber's return to Berlin the loyal city wore the aspect of the camp of a victorious army. Troops were constantly marching through, welcomed and dismissed by the delighted citizens with festive honours. The warrior was the only real hero of the day in every grade of society. The ladies of Berlin had eyes only for the brilliant Russian officers of the Emperor Alexander's guards, whom they declared to be "almost as seductive and handsome as their irresistible lord and master." All the celebrities of the time, in war, diplomacy, art, and science—all the aristocracy of birth, wealth, and rank had crowded into Berlin to be present at the expected festivities; the first, the most important, and the most brilliant of which was to be the welcome given to the returning King, for whose reception in the capital preparations were made by all alike, with full and grateful hearts,

on the most magnificent scale. Festive thoughts were in every mind; all hearts seemed opened to joy, to pleasure, and enthusiasm. The streets swarmed with eager merry crowds; theatres, concert-halls, and other places of amusement were densely thronged. After all, it may be here recorded, the King, in his usual unsympathetic fashion, returned to Berlin unknown, and thus disarranged all the festive plans of his loving subjects, and rendered all their proposed demonstrations of loyalty vain.

There could have been scarce any time when Weber could have come to Berlin more opportunely, whether for the reception of strong impressions, or for a pleasant recognition to himself. The very evening of his arrival he received the most striking and gratifying proofs that he was far from having been forgotten during his long absence by those who had testified love and respect to him in former days. There was an evening performance at the Sing-Akademie; and thither Weber betook himself in the hopes of finding most of his musical friends. The assemblage was a brilliant one. He entered quietly during a pause in the music. But Lichtenstein saw him, sprang up, and hurried to him. The words, "Weber is there!" ran from mouth to mouth. All his many friends left their places and crowded around him. Before he could well look about him, he found himself the centre of a joyous throng, which strangers, anxious for his acquaintance, now joined. Marshal Blucher, who was present as the hero of the evening, was comparatively deserted; and Zelter looked on

with savage face. Not less affecting to his sympathetic heart was the impression made on him the following day, when he went to visit the parents of Mayerbeer. A dinner was being given to an orphan school at the rich banker's house. The chief notabilities of Berlin were present and at table. But as Weber looked in, "Mamma" Beer flew to him, with the cry of "Our Weber! see!" All rose, children and all, with a jubilee shout. Men crowded around him once more with kindly greetings and offerings of service. "If thus received in the "world," it may be well imagined what was his welcome among his "well-beloved Cossacks." In a letter to Caroline Brandt he spoke out the delight this friendly recognition gave him. "I cannot deny," he wrote, "that this enthusiastic, almost exaggerated, testimony of affection and admiration, on all hands, has given me much pleasurable emotion, and imparted a fresh impulse to my spirit. I trust I shall obtain thereby new power and desire for work, and be able to give myself up to production. But most cherished by me, beyond all, is the thought that my darling may have reason to be proud of her own Carl."

If no determined form was given to Weber's creative powers by the fresh impulse awakened in him, at all events a determined tendency was bestowed on them by the new feelings and ideas which the scenes passing around now called forth in him. For the first time a thoroughly patriotic sentiment was aroused within him; for the first time his soul warmed towards the thoughts expressed by the words

freedom, fatherland, heroism, and hatred of oppression. Such a hold did these watchwords of the day take on his plastic and impressionable mind, that for a length of time all other artistic impulses were thrust into the background. His all-absorbing desire now was, to seek out, for the artistic embodiment of his new ideas, the moulds into which he could pour the creations of the flowing enthusiasm which possessed him. To this enthusiasm—the direct relation of which to worldly and material interests lay too far apart from the real nature of Weber's musical genius to allow it to possess him for any length of time—was owing the existence of those immortal songs of martial glory and freedom which burst upon the world a few months afterwards. They sprang from the soil of the freedom-ideas of 1814, and were soon destined to throw all the political compositions of his predecessors into the shade. By their powerful influence on the hearts of young Germany, they contributed no little towards establishing the love of freedom, and the feeling for national honour, among the German people; whilst at the same time they transformed his own reputation into fame, and gave him a niche in the temple of history, among the great German singers who had fought the good fight against all slavery of the mind as well as body. These productions of a passing tendency, however, had the strange effect of classing Weber —quiet, good burgher as he was, only too much inclined to show respect to power and place— among the demagogues of the age, who were hated

by princes, and looked upon as demons by the party of reaction.

One of Weber's great desires, on revisiting Berlin, was to obtain further representations of his "Sylvana." But in spite of the glorious welcome he had received from almost all the influential personages of the day, both musical and official, he found a thousand hindrances thrown in the way of its accomplishment. Bernhard Anselm Weber, "on whose brow," as Carl Maria himself expressed it, "the cold sweat stood at the thought of his possible appointment in Berlin," was naturally not zealous in his cause. Iffland was lying on his deathbed; and no new manager had been yet appointed. The royal theatres, consequently, did no more than was necessary to prevent their being closed; and carelessness and negligence were the order of the day. Gratuitous representations in honour of the foreign troops, and military festivities at the theatre, occupied also so much time, and occasioned so much preparation, that there could be no thought, it was said, of restudying an opera. Weber, however, allowed the festive torrent to sweep by, and bided his time.

The official entry of the King into his capital took place at last upon the 7th of August. Festive representations were given on the occasion in the theatres; in the Opera House an apropos prologue by Kotzebue, and a military ballet. The city was brilliantly illuminated; and Weber, whose taste did not lie in the theatrical treat of the night, joined in the throng of sightseers. At one moment, when

jammed into a crushing mass of men, he was nigh being seriously injured by an advancing carriage; a cry of alarm escaped him; a man looked out of the carriage anxiously; and Weber saw before him the magnificent head of Tieck. The poet called to him, stretched forth his hand, and dragged the young composer with triumph into his vehicle. When once he had Weber safely seated by his side, the poet held him tight, and shouted out, "Now I understand the illuminations; now I know what really brings us to Berlin!"

In the whirlpool of the intellectual and material life around him, Weber seems to have found new spirit. His fantasy received fresh impulse; and ideas poured in upon him in abundant stream. His powers of creation, more than those of any other composer of our times, were the result of an intimate sympathy between his own genius and the public that listened to his tones. "During the week I have been here," he wrote, "I have played more than during my whole sojourn in Prague. I discover, to my joy, that a host of musical ideas are teeming in my head. I must labour hard to execute all my intentions; and yet I live in such a stormy restless whirl, that I am never satisfied with my own doings."

With his thoughts engaged upon the reproduction of his "Sylvana," Weber again felt the unsatisfied longing for dramatic composition strong upon him. This desire was heightened by his constant intercourse with Tieck, and with Brentano, who was also in Berlin. He saw now the opportunity for the

acquisition of a truly poetical and artistically-constructed opera-book. Brentano showed great zeal in his endeavours to dig up, out of the legends of the Middle Ages, some exciting romantic subject. One evening, as Weber sat on Lichtenstein's sofa, exhausted with his weary preparations for his concert, Brentano burst into the room. He had found a subject; it was that of the "Tannhäuser." At that time the story had all the magic charm of novelty. Whilst Brentano sat and detailed the story in his graphic animated way, Weber listened with beating heart and delighted face. He felt that it was not only one which music could so richly embody, but one which music alone could touch. A vision of brilliancy and power swam before Weber's eyes, as he saw in fancy the contest at the Wartzburg, the siren charms of the Venus and her world of enchantment, the pontifical pomp of Rome. There was music in every thought, music in every situation, music in every scene. Weber was enchanted; and nothing could satisfy him but that Brentano should go off at once to begin the work of his libretto. Thus fate had nigh ordained it that the tale of wonder, which has been the cause of so much excitement and controversy in modern times, should have found its musical treatment from Weber's hand thirty years earlier. There is no doubt that a subject of such deep poetical meaning would have inspired the romantic nature of Weber's genius to great results, and might have led to an opera more full of beauty and melody and charm, if not more

profound and great, than that of its future composer. But the destiny of art willed it otherwise, perhaps also for the best. Business occupations came in the way of both author and composer. The conjunction never took place; although a great portion of the text of the "Tannhäuser" seems to have been written.

Surrounded as Weber was at this time by a host of notabilities, who showed him marked attention, and testified to him their admiration, among whom, in addition to artists, authors, and men of science, may be noted Prince Radziwill, Hardenberg, the Duke of Cumberland, afterwards king of Hanover, Princes Biron and Gallizin, and Princess Solms, he might have been supposed to have been happy and content. But his mind was much preoccupied and disturbed by the changeful mood and constant jealous doubts and fears of his ladylove at Prague. His heart was perpetually on the rack, and his nervous system cruelly excited. He was frequently in such a wretched state of feeling, that his rich fantasy deserted him, and the expectations, aroused by his celebrated powers of improvisation, were bitterly disappointed. On one occasion alone, at the house of Prince Radziwill, does he appear, although in a miserable state of mind on account of a letter just received from Caroline Brandt, to have excited the wonted unanimous enthusiasm. "Be pacified," he wrote to the jealous little woman. "The attention ladies show me is but the amusement or the affectation of the hour. There is no thought of love in it,

my child. You must not suppose all other women have the same bad taste as you. The embraces of dear old Mamma Beer can surely be no reproach to me. My lips, eyes, and ears might all be subjected to the most inquisitorial examination. The corruption of a great city is known only to those who are themselves corrupt, or who wilfully seek out corruption. He who touches it not, is no more burned by it than a cat by the moon."

Weber's projected concert, which had been frequently postponed, was now at last fixed for the 26th of August; and, this time at least, he had spared none of those pains which were required by the custom of the times. A mass of letters had been written to influential personages—a host of visits paid. His "evil star" was, however, in the ascendancy again, he declared, in his hunt after royalty, which, judging by his own description, must have been harassing in every way. "The carriage did not come in time," he writes on the 24th; "the printer did not bring me the bills, which it was necessary to take with me. When I was at last able to start, I reached the palace at the very moment the King drove away. There was nothing to be done but to follow him to Charlottenburg. When I got there, he had gone out walking, and was no where to be found. So back again went I to Berlin, where I was at least enabled to see the Crown Prince, who received me with great amiability and politeness, and afterwards the other princes and princesses." "Twice again," he writes on the 25th, "have I missed an interview with the King. At last I was

obliged to give up my hopes, and attend the rehearsal of my concert at the theatre." Up to the last moment, on the very day of the concert, Weber was still hurried, harassed, wearied to death, by endless preparations, visits, invitations. The concert, however, proved in every way a success. The theatre was crowded, and the public enthusiastic; more particularly when Weber once more not only found his old fire and wondrous powers of invention, but even surpassed himself, in his improvisation. His new piano piece in E, and the chorale of his hymn, "In seiner Ordnung schafft der Herr," seem also to have met with especial appreciation. "Tired as a dog," as Weber describes himself to have been, after all the exertions of the concert, he found strength, however, to be present at a supper, given him by his friends, and still sufficient force of inspiration left, when some verses were written on the spot in his honour, to take the paper and compose to the words a canon for four voices, which was immediately sung, at sight, by the company.

One of the great results of Weber's concert was the fresh impulse given to the desire, so often expressed by his influential friends, to see him established in Berlin. The wish was now in every mouth; and the report that Weber would shortly be appointed to the post of musical director, left vacant by the recent death of Himmel, spread quickly through the city. Under these circumstances, it was not easy for the theatrical worthies in power, whatever their ill-will, to continue to throw hindrances in the way of

the representation of "Sylvana." The rehearsals of Weber's opera were at length resumed; and on these occasions the young composer had ample means of acquiring the most gratifying proofs of the esteem in which he was held by all the members of the company and the orchestra. Many times was his hand pressed in secret, and such words murmured in his ear as, "You must stop here,"—"When the old gentleman (Iffland) is dead, great things are to be done,"—"We want you, and must have you."

The position, to which Weber was admitted in society meanwhile, the festivals of various kinds, from which he could not well absent himself, and the invitations, evening after evening, absorbed so much of his time, that the chief purposes of his journey, repose and quiet work, were wholly nullified. His health and general spirits, however, had undoubtedly been beneficially influenced by his fresh contact with congenial minds; and, as undoubtedly, his genius had been animated anew by the great national and political spirit astir around him. The seeds thus sown did not spring up, it is true, during his sojourn in Berlin; the few compositions he there brought to bear were scanty, and without any characteristic distinction. But it was yet destined to grow and blossom in unwonted luxuriance in the forthcoming "Lyre and Sword." "My life here," he wrote to his beloved on the 3d of September, "is one eternal breathless race-course. How will the poor machine hold out? What others call fatigue, such as travelling, is rest to me; I can then recover from the whirl of the fatiguing

world. Sometimes all the proofs of respect and consideration I receive, which ought to rejoice me, become so intolerable to me, that I lose all patience, and could massacre my best friends. Perhaps these are moments of madness. The artist, after all, is born to be the martyr of social life: and it is right he should fulfil his destination."

The rehearsals of "Sylvana" were thus carried on amidst a hundred preoccupations of business, of pleasure, of preparations for his departure, which a fresh and urgent invitation from the Duke of Gotha now rendered imperative. This pressure on his time, at the last moment, was greatly increased by an invitation from the Crown Prince to a charming little dinner, at which Weber was greatly enchanted by the prince's amiability, frankness, clear views of art, and general extensive information. The direction taken by the taste of the then reigning sovereign excited Weber's scorn and horror. Ballet and pantomime, under his auspices, were almost the sole triumphs of an establishment, which the people of Berlin were wont, with pompous pride, to style their "Grand Institute for the Cultivation of Art;" and, when Iffland's watchful eye was withdrawn from the boards by death, ruled there supreme. But the Crown Prince, Weber found cause to judge far differently; and he afterwards was frequently accustomed to declare that he should have been delighted to accept the direction under the auspices of so enlightened a man.

"Sylvana" was reproduced on the 5th September to a house crammed to suffocation. But the public

seems now to have received the opera with cool indifference. No mention of any token of success is made by Weber either in his diary or his letters to Caroline Brandt. This utter want of sympathy with the opera, however, is intelligible enough, and finds an easy explanation. The powerful tide of contemporaneous events had swept all feelings far away from the artificial sentiments expressed by such a hyper-romantic subject; and, in spite of all pomp and show, its unnatural situations could excite no interest any longer in a people whose hearts had been so powerfully stirred by the great events which filled the minds of Europe. How "stale, flat, and unprofitable" must such a drama have appeared to men accustomed to see an all-absorbing drama of real life passing before their very eyes! A smile of pity was all that "Sylvana" could have then elicited.

Immediately after this unsatisfactory performance, in the midst of a depressing torrent of rain, Weber got into the carriage which was to convey him on his way; and after a short stay upon business matters at Leipsic, he was once more in Weimar. Whatever the feelings with which he started on his journey, however, there can be no doubt that, as he thus sat alone in his carriage, with the monotonous rain pattering ceaselessly upon the roof, the new creative impulses, awakened within him at Berlin, now sought and found their true artistic form. It is certainly remarkable in Weber's life, that it was generally in such moments as these, on lonely journeys, and after periods of excitement, that he found

his clearest ideas, recognised his previous mistakes, formed his resolutions to take the true path, and then held to his resolve.

In Weimar, Weber learned that the Grand Duchess was on the point of starting for Vienna. The news of the young composer's arrival reached her ears, however. She sent for him immediately, and chatted an hour with him, in her travelling-dress, leaving him only after a promise that he would visit her the following year. In Weimar too he found a letter from Liebich, urging his immediate return to his post at Prague, where his aid was imperatively needed on account of the incapacity of Clement, who, although a clever musician, was in no wise fitted for the position of conductor. Weber hesitated: but the yearning for still a few quiet days, for the sake of noting down the fresh musical ideas which were teeming in his head and heart, overpowered all other considerations. He stood resolutely by the terms of his leave of absence, and went on to Gotha. The Duke, however, was no longer there. He was just then resident at his old barely-furnished castle of Gräfentonna, where he was taking the waters of the lately discovered sulphur-springs, in order personally to establish the reputation of the bath. So to Gräfentonna Weber followed. The old castle was situated on the banks of the rushing Tonna, surrounded by vast woods, above which its pointed roofs and gables towered picturesquely. It had its eventful history from the times of the Middle Ages to the devastating days of the cruel Tilly, long before Duke Emil Au-

gust held there his fantastic improvisations, his concerts, and his strange little court.

"The wonderful old castle where I now am," wrote Weber to Caroline Brandt, "and where I sit to write these lines in a gloomy apartment, with the old windows and doors rattling in my ears, gives me a certain pleasant sense of stillness and repose. I could work here, and do much, were I left in peace, and, above all, had I not certain agitating feelings, connected with the city far away, which mix themselves with every thought and deed. . . . I drove over here with that anxious feeling, which always besets me when I have not seen a person for a length of time, and do not know exactly how I shall be received. My fears were wholly groundless, however; for the Duke welcomed me with as much heartiness and cordiality as I could possibly desire. . . . In the midst of my throat and finger employments with the Duke, which one day occupied me twelve hours at a stretch, I have found time to arrange my papers, and compose two new songs." And what were these two songs thus simply mentioned? They were not only the first-fruits of the harvest ripened in Weber's heart by the warm sun of national enthusiasm at Berlin—they were the first steps on that splendid by-path of his talent which were to lead him to the temple of fame and the summit of popularity. These songs, thus casually noticed, were no others than "Lützow's Wilde Jagd," and "The Song of the Sword." These inspirations, which were to thunder through all Germany, and arouse a world, ferment-

ing with great thoughts and deeds, were thus breathed forth in the still, gloomy, forest-skirted Gothic chamber of the lonesome old castle of Gräfentonna.

"The Duke will not hear of my departure," wrote Weber again to Caroline; "his kindness is as inexhaustible as his wit: although, I must confess, he allows his wit to be a little too biting sometimes. . . . He loves to sit by me at the piano, and describe to me the pictures which rise to his fancy's eye, whilst I give them a form in music; or he invents and relates stories, which I am expected to accompany. Thus, day by day, I return in the evening to my quiet chamber enriched by some new idea."

From this pleasant labour in idleness Weber was torn, after too brief a space, by another anxious letter of entreaty from Liebich, which he now could no longer resist. He resolved, though much against his will, to give up the weeks still due to him of his leave of absence, and even to renounce his intention of a concert at Leipsic, where he had hoped to obtain honour and credit by his new patriotic songs, the true fire and force of which he himself began to feel. So he turned his face once more to Prague, where he arrived on the 25th September, having noted down his magnificent song, "Men and Boys," to Körner's words, by the way.

Apart his delight at again greeting his beloved, Weber returned to his duties at Prague with no very pleasurable feelings. "The nearer I approached the great desert of houses, the more my heart failed me," he wrote to Lichtenstein. "Nor did my presentiment

deceive me; for in a few days I had fallen back into the old cramped and unhappy state of mind." Again, to Rochlitz: "The pain it gave me to return so much sooner than I had intended I cannot describe to you. . . . I soon repented my compliance; that is, if a man can ever repent having done his duty, in the broadest sense of the word. . . . And, after all, there was no real necessity for my return. . . . And Liebich's gratitude bears about the same proportion as the necessity, to the great sacrifice I have made. Item—another lesson for the future; never believe a manager's lamentations, and always take out your leave of absence in full!" Annoyances there were, certainly, enough at the theatre to depress the young conductor. The operas, given in his absence, had been negligently studied; discipline had been weakened by the absence of a firm guiding hand; and a host of disagreements and quarrels had been created, which were subversive of all order. With the support of Liebich, however, Weber seized upon the reins of conductorship with vigour, got rid of the recalcitrants, and had the satisfaction, upon the production of Weigl's "Corsair from Love," of receiving the unbounded applause of the public, which thus marked the beneficial change created by his own direction of affairs.

There is no doubt, at the same time, that the frequent misunderstandings which began to arise with the object of his affections, greatly contributed to the depression of the young man's mind. The young lady's disposition to jealousy and suspicion has been already mentioned. To this feeling were now added

differences of opinion regarding views of life and principles of action, which kept Weber's heart on the rack. In answer to Lichtenstein's happy announcement of his own engagement, he wrote almost despairingly: "Heaven grant you a good wife; one who will make you happy—at least, not unhappy; and that will be already a great boon. All my fondest hopes are vanishing day by day. I live like a drunken man, who dances on a thin coating of ice, and, spite his better reason, would persuade himself that he is on solid ground. . . . I love her with all my heart and soul; and, if there be no truth in her affection, the last chord of my whole life has been struck. I may still live on—marry, perhaps, one day—who knows? but love and trust again, never more!"

In spite of this harassing condition of mind, and his manifold occupations in the theatre, Weber found time, however, not to compose—for all his works were always ready in his head long before written down—but to note his surpassingly beautiful songs in the famous "Lyre and Sword." Among these were his "Schlacht, du brichst an," "The Horseman's Song," "The Prayer before the Battle," "The Prayer during the Battle," and that most poetical, most melodious of all his Lieder of this kind, "Die Wunde brennt, die bleichen Lippen beben," to which, before the end of the year, he added his "Comfort" and "My Fatherland." The writing of this whole cycle of national songs, in the best sense of the expression, thus took place between the middle of September and the end of December 1814. Their conception and

composition may probably be ascribed to the six weeks which passed between the beginning of August and the first date of their transcription.

Another affair, moreover, occupied his mind greatly during the same period. He was agreeably surprised, one day, by a letter from Count Carl von Brühl, a talented man, and excellent musical dilettante in Berlin. This letter informed Weber that the Count was led to expect the appointment of general director of the Berlin court theatre, and that, in case of the fulfilment of his expectation, he desired to secure the services of the Prague capellmeister. The hope of being able to attain his desire of occupying a worthy sphere in Berlin, and give up his cramping existence in Prague, now dawned in the young capellmeister's heart. But Weber was noways disposed to act without due deliberation; and in a straightforward, honest, manly answer, he informed the Count, that, disposed as he was to come, he could only accept a position which would ensure his being able to use it in the best interests of art. In a letter to Lichtenstein also, who did all in his power to forward the affair, he wrote, relatively to Bernhard Romberg, who had been also named as possible new capellmeister: "Thanks for all you have done. You have acted entirely in accordance with my own feelings in informing Romberg of the affair. On no account would I have lost the respect of such a man by any seeming deceit. Let him win the prize who may; and the other will have no cause to make wry faces at him.... Meanwhile I have had an offer

from Kotzebue, to undertake the direction of the Königsberg theatre. It is flattering, I own; but I have declined with thanks."

Amidst his other multifarious preoccupations, a whole month was now given by Weber, with unremitting zeal and industry, to the preparation of Beethoven's immortal opera, "Fidelio," for representation. Fourteen careful rehearsals scarcely seemed to him sufficient for so great a work. The more deeply Weber studied it, the more he was impressed with its great beauties. Its general treatment, however, never fully satisfied him in a dramatic point of view. This opinion he always maintained in after years, when his own dramatic tendencies, which certainly went far away from those of Beethoven, were more confirmed. Both the two composers valued each other. They both stood far too high to have felt any envy or hostility. They even afterwards became friends, as far as their great difference of character could admit of friendship. But they never fully understood each other. Indeed, it cannot be denied, that the more truly the tendency of any artist springs out of his own nature, the less he can admit the genuineness of any other's tendency; the less he can comprehend it. Genius cannot but be fanatical; its concessions can but be hypocrisy. Great artists, consequently, are the worst art-critics.

"Fidelio" was at last produced on the 21st November, and admirably executed. But it met with only cool indifference from the very public that had worshipped Mozart. Weber was furious at the re-

sult, and expressed himself accordingly in a letter to Gänsbacher. "They could not understand all that was really great in this music. It was enough to drive one mad. Tomfoolery would suit them far better, I opine."

The year was now drawing to a close; and, spite of occasional happy days with his beloved, Weber could not shake off that feeling of utter loneliness, which fell upon him with still greater intensity, after the excitement of production in "Lyre and Sword." It was increased, instead of being diminished, by his mixing in the artistic reunions, which it was the fashion to assemble in the great aristocratic houses of Prague. How often, after the mention of such a party in his diary, do such exclamations of despair follow, as "O Dio! Eheu! Ach Gott!" "I cannot but feel that I unconsciously withdraw myself more and more from my fellow-men," he wrote to Gottfried Weber. "There are so many miserable souls in the world! Bohemia has become for me a mere hospital of all intellect." Nor was this unhealthy state of mind improved even by the great success of his concert, given on the 6th of January, when his "Lützow's Wilde Jager" and the "Song of the Sword" called down the most rapturous applause, and had to be repeated. The acclamation, he would have it in his capricious mood, was given only to the composition, and did not come from hearts, in which there glowed the smallest spark of the spirit which animated these songs of freedom. "Would," he exclaimed,

"that I could hear them sung by a noble crew of young ardent patriots!"

No wonder then that his unsatisfied soul should have clung more and more to his affection for Caroline Brandt, and that the yearning for a happy home, with his beloved by his side, should have waxed stronger and stronger within him. He was never so well pleased as when occupied with her affairs. He undertook the management of her accounts with his usual scrupulous exactitude. All the business of the inexperienced girl and her mother was placed in his hands. In order to increase the receipts for Caroline's benefit, he allowed it to be given out that Capellmeister Weber would sell the tickets at the box-office of the theatre, and he actually remained there the whole day endeavouring to obtain the highest possible prices for the tickets by his pleasant wit and amiable gaiety. All the members of the aristocracy, all the theatre-frequenters of Prague flocked to the theatre-doors with curiosity. No doubt on this occasion, as on others, Weber had shown too little regard for public opinion. For scandal began to clamour loudly respecting the connexion between Caroline Brandt and the young capellmeister, and to assail the poor innocent girl's character pitilessly. Weber was deeply shocked when these malignant rumours reached his ears. There was but one thing to be done. He entreated the injured girl to marry him at once.

It may seem strange now, that a little singer, admired by the public it is true, but whose fame is now forgotten except as Weber's wife, should have hesi-

tated to accept the hand of the celebrated genius. But so it was. It must be remembered, however, that Weber at this period was no more than a promising young composer; he bore the character of being thoughtless and unsettled in disposition; he had still a load of debt upon his shoulders; and he could offer no other guarantee for domestic happiness and comfort than his honourable nature, his trueheartedness, and a talent, the importance of which a young girl was unable to gauge. She, on the contrary, was just then the cherished favourite of the public, young, lovely, talented, with a probably brilliant career before her. Moreover Weber, whose experiences of theatrical life had unfortunately not been the best, and who considered the stage as incompatible with domestic peace and happiness, made it an imperative condition of the union that his wife should quit the boards at once and for ever. That Caroline had a strong attachment for her lover there can be no doubt. But there was a worldly-wise and cautious mother by her side, not ill-disposed to the young man certainly, but who had a knack of weighing material advantages in a very scrupulous balance. The answer which the ardent lover received was, that Caroline must have time for reflexion before she gave up her art. Irritated in some degree, but anxious also to avoid any pretext for attack on his beloved's character, Weber resolved to leave Prague as soon as possible under the circumstances. But that he should quit Prague on her account, Caroline declared, would make her wretched. Weber was

tossed upon a sea of distressing doubts. "It is no use talking," he wrote to Lichtenstein, "my wife must belong to me alone, and not to the world; and passion shall not drive me to accept an alternative, which may bring with it the misery of a life. She loves me too well to let me go; but who knows how long love may last amidst troubles and anxieties, which may show my temper in an unamiable light?" In this harassing position of uncertainty, at the same time, an absurd and nonsensical difference of opinion seemed on the point of sundering for ever two souls destined for each other. Strange to say, Weber's new composition, "Lyre and Sword," was the cause. Caroline had always entertained the intensest admiration for Napoleon, in her eyes "the greatest hero of the age;" and she found her feelings outraged by the attacks made on him by her lover in these new songs. Political disputes arose between the loving pair, and led to nothing but bitterness.

To solve these painful complications, Weber could see no better means than the acceptance of some engagement elsewhere. He looked anxiously to the result of the negotiations at Berlin. Count Carl von Brühl had now been nominated general director of the Royal Theatres, and had sent in a report in favour of Weber, whom he designated as a "talented fiery composer, distinguished above all his contemporaries by his general information, and his acquirements in poetry, literature, and art," as director of the German opera. But all was yet in abeyance; and not a gleam came from Berlin to

lighten the darkened horizon of Weber's life. The only result of his correspondence with the Prussian capital at this period was the sale of his "Lyre and Sword" to Schlesinger the musical publisher, for the poor sum of twelve louis-d'or.

Meanwhile, saddened in spirit, no longer the "sprightly wild young capellmeister" the theatrical company first knew him; Weber went through the monotonous duties of his office with undiminished zeal and fidelity. Opera after opera was studied, rehearsed, represented with the utmost care. For his own benefit, which brought him in the sum of 1204 florins, he produced the "Cosi fan tutte" of Mozart, with fresh words, and under the title of the "Magic Test." In other respects too, he busied his distracted mind. He conducted a concert, given by the Hermstadts, father and son, both of whom were great flute-players. The latter conceived such an affection for Weber, that he afterwards settled in Dresden, in order to be near him. He wrote two unknown pieces, now apparently lost to the world; and about the same time he composed, for a similar occasion, an adagio for flute, violoncello, and piano, which afterwards swelled into the trio for the same instruments known as his Op. 63. Another matter also, of importance to him in a practical sense, greatly occupied his attention. About this time his friend Gottfried Weber had published his great work upon the theory of Harmony and Composition. The researches of the author in the compilation of his book had led him to the construction of a new in-

strument, as a sort of "tempo-interpreter" between composer and conductor, for the purpose of determining, without possibility of error, the exact tempo of any piece of music to be played. This instrument, which he named a Chronometer, he communicated to Carl Maria. The idea was not a new one, and was never given out as such by Gottfried Weber. The inventor, however, considered his instrument as a vast improvement on the already known "Metronom," the clumsinesses and deficiencies of which he pointed out in his pamphlet on the subject. Carl Maria does not appear to have been greatly impressed with the invention, although he gave it the most careful attention. "True feeling," he wrote to his friend Gottfried, "will never take a tempo wrong, although there may be some slight difference in slowness or quickness, according to individual temperament. But, in any case, such an invention cannot but be useful in showing many a musical blockhead the way he should go." In after days, however, Weber made considerable use of the chronometer. In the scoring of "Euryanthe," for instance, the tempo of each piece was marked down with care, according to the instrument, and strictly impressed on the attention of conductors, when the opera was given on any stage.

Weber's thoughts, however, seem to have been mainly occupied with the very compositions which his beloved regarded with such irritated feelings, but the importance of which he could not but feel. "'Lyre and Sword' are my latest children," he wrote

to Lichtenstein; "and I trust they may be dear to you as such. . . . In the Prayer during the Battle, I must entreat you not to look upon the piano accompaniment as descriptive of a battle-field. I am not fond of such musical pictures. What I wanted to express was the swelling feeling of the agitated soul praying to Heaven during the battle. Pardon me for making such a remark to a man like you."

Towards the end of May, disagreeablenesses of various kinds had so accumulated about Weber, that his life in Prague began to become almost intolerable to him. His brother Fridolin came to him from Freiburg, where he had thrown-up a good situation for no other reason, it would seem, than because he thought his brother might obtain him a better. Fritz, as he was called, had evidently much of the spirit of Franz Anton in him. His recklessness and idleness drove Carl Maria wild; nor was the young capellmeister's mind one moment at rest until he had found his brother an engagement in a company at Carlsbad. At this period also he was rendered very unhappy by the discovery that a considerable sum in money, as well as clothes and linen, had been stolen from his drawers. An unreasonable fit of jealousy now again seized on Caroline, on account of a newly-engaged actress, of the name of Christine Böhler, to whom the unhappy lover was falsely accused of showing overweening attention. This disease of the mind assumed such a degree of intensity in the misguided girl, that the life of the loving pair was now one series of exciting scenes of quarrels and tem-

porary reconciliations. Towards the beginning of June, Caroline declared to the distracted Weber, that such an existence could be borne no longer, and that one of the two must leave Prague. She now urged the very step against which she had once protested with so many tears and supplications. Thus tormented, Weber formed the sudden resolve, to anticipate his leave of absence by a month, and to quit the place at once. With letters of introduction from his friend Count Clam and the Princess Maria Anna of Bavaria, sister of the king, who was then with her husband at Prague, and evinced a great regard for the young composer, he left Prague as early as the 6th of June.

The whole tone of the young man's mind during the journey of three months which then ensued, as displayed by all his contradictions, his struggles, his ever-varying moods of light and shade, is almost too painful to touch upon. It is pitiable to see his once strong nature subverted by one all-powerful feeling, and to mark how much he was the slave of one being, amiable in truth, but not without caprice, who never seems sufficiently to have weighed the importance of many a word which fell upon the poor victim's heart with crushing weight of misery. The letters which Weber despatched at this period to the woman he still loved, spite all their differences, with all his heart and soul, would only throw a false light upon his real individuality, and present an erroneous picture of him in the weak, sentimental, almost effeminate dreamer into which his abnormal condition of

moral enervation had now transformed his otherwise fresh, nervous, powerful nature.

With one of those strange contradictions between the artist and the man, of which many evidences have been given in Weber's character, and which would seem to prove a thoroughly independent duality, it was at this very period of weak depression that one of the most powerful and energetic of all his creations came into the world—his "Kampf und Sieg."

CHAPTER XV.

A PERIOD OF CHANGE.

THAT portion of Germany, which was the most remote from the scenes of the late wars, was naturally the one the best adapted for an artistic tour; and Weber, consequently, on quitting Prague, turned his face in the direction of Bavaria. He had many friends there, whose companionship he was anxious to enjoy. So, on the 18th June, he found himself once more in Munich, where he was received with open arms by his faithful Bärmann, and lodged in his house. His former pleasant intercourse in the Bavarian capital was quickly resumed in friendly families.

It was one of the characteristics of Weber's affectionate and sympathetic nature, that, when separated from those he loved, he strove by every means to connect them as intimately as possible in his daily life. He had parted from the object of his devoted attachment "more in sorrow than in anger;" and one of the strongest evidences of this peculiar characteristic may be found in the pains he took in his letters to Caroline

Brandt to describe to her every detail of the chamber in which he was lodged, and thus to associate her with every object around him. "I am so charmed to find," he wrote to her, "that we generally write to each other on the very same day. It is so pleasant to think that at the same moment as myself, perhaps, you are occupied at your well-known table. In future let me know the very hour, as well as the day, on which you write. But you cannot tell where I am sitting. Call your fancy to aid, whilst I make you a plan of the little room I occupy." Following these words comes a plan of his chamber, in which every window and door, every article of furniture, "the chair on which I sit, the table at which I write," were marked with scrupulous exactitude. "You see," he goes on to say, "that, when I want to roam up and down in my den, I must use considerable adroitness in winding in and out, so as not to upset my furniture. Would that I could give you as accurate a picture of my whole soul! You alone occupy it entirely." The simplicity of Weber's wants and habits stands out clearly in this description of his scanty room; and yet no one could appreciate and enjoy more than himself all the luxuries as well as the comforts of life.

During his present sojourn in Munich Weber was thrown into more immediate and constant intercourse than before with the talented and amiable Baron von Poissl. Although older than Weber, and far more experienced in operatic composition, Poissl sought the young composer's advice incessantly in all his writ-

ings, went over with him his opera of "Athalia," which had already been given with great and deserved applause, as well as his other earlier works, and even made many changes in his music in compliance with his young adviser's clever suggestions.

Whilst these trials of Poissl's music were going on, Weber made the acquaintance of Fräulein Wohlbrück, who had originally sung the part of Joas in the "Athalia," and, in consequence of this introduction, that also of her father, who was at the same time actor and author. As fate would have it, the very same day that Weber made Wohlbrück's acquaintance the news of the victory won at Waterloo arrived in Munich. The whole city was immediately decorated as if by the wave of a magic wand. Illuminations, fireworks, *Te Deums*, salvos of cannon were improvised by enchantment, as it were. The nightmare of the "hundred days," which had lain so heavily on the heart of Germany, was suddenly removed; and the jubilee was universal. Men seemed intoxicated with joy: friends or strangers, they embraced each other exultingly in the public streets. Weber was carried away by the general enthusiasm. He followed the crowd into St. Michael's Church to return thanks for the fall of the arch-enemy. Whilst he listened there to the pealing tones of the *Te Deum*, an irresistible yearning came upon him to celebrate the great event by some important work of his own art. The vision of a splendid Cantata of Victory floated before his mind, as yet in shadowy outline. On leaving the church he stum-

bled by chance upon Wohlbrück, seized his arm, and communicated his idea to him. The actor-author took it up with as much enthusiasm as himself, and promised to have a poem ready in a few days. It was a whole month, however, before the words of the proposed cantata were written. It was not until the beginning of August that a detailed sketch of the whole work was in the young composer's hands, and that he could occupy himself with musical ideas to the words. Thus it was that "Kampf und Sieg" came into the world.

The task was a hard one. Not only was Weber's time greatly occupied with his social intercourse in houses, where the advances made to him were impossible to be repelled, and with the lessons again given to the daughter of his good friend Wiebeking, but with all the preparations for his performance before the court, for which the way had been smoothed to him by the kindness of all around him, as well as with those of his own public concert. More than all, however, were his creative powers deadened by the deep moral and physical depression, which had fallen like a blight upon him. His letters to his beloved bore sad evidences of his unhappy state of mind. "Sometimes I think," he wrote, "that all power of productiveness is lost to me for ever; as if, for the future, I were doomed to be a nothing in the world. . . . I cannot tell you, my beloved soul, how prostrated I am. . . . But I will accept my destiny without a murmur." Again; "I went in the evening to the suburb theatre to see a stupid farce. I could not

sit it out. I had expected a letter from you; and there was none. But my efforts to seek oblivion of my sorrow were in vain. . . . It costs me a bitter struggle to undertake the preparations for my concert; although I should lie if I did not confess that more than half the trouble is taken off my hands. . . . More than all, I feel so bitterly that my own doings, however they may please others, give me no joy whatever now." Once more: "Would I could shroud myself in the darkest mist, so as to be seen of none! The kindness of my friends only pains my heart. I feel better when I am alone, and none are there to care for me. I can bear too the whirl of the great world; for there I can laugh at all the follies I see —the false forms, the empty ceremonies, the pitiful importance of silly trifles, the ignorance of man that he has been created for a higher purpose. I sometimes think then, that, with all my efforts to reach goodness and perfection, I am but a sorry fool. . . . Cannot you give me the courage to persevere?" To his friends Weber wrote in the same strain. In a letter to Rochlitz he exclaims: "I seem dead for all art. At least creative power fails me. My cantata creeps on like a snail; and yet I know that, as an occasional subject, another event in this changeful world may deprive it of its true effect. But it is no use reasoning with myself. Genius will not listen, however wisely reason may lecture, and only grows more cross and irritated by lecturing." It was a sad and weary time for the poor heart-distracted artist!

Weber's performances, however, necessarily called

urgently for his utmost attention, and occupied a considerable portion of his time. He played before the King and Queen at Nymphenburg, and was received by the worthy pair, not only with graciousness, but with hearty kindness. Another performance was given by him in the palace of the Duke of Leuchtenburg, better known as Prince Eugene, Viceroy of Italy, who after the fall of Napoleon had taken up his residence in the native town of his wife, the Princess Auguste Amalie of Bavaria. Weber was greatly interested in the duke, whose gallant bearing struck his fancy, as much as the warrior-viceroy's profound knowledge of music surprised him; a handsome diamond ring was given him as a memorial of his pleasant evening. Immediately also followed his own public concert in the theatre, on the 2d of August. The house was crammed in every part. The Royal Family was present. The whole public listened with wrapt attention to Weber's performances of his own piano concerto, and his duet for piano and clarionette with the accomplished Bärmann. The overture to "Sylvana" met with the liveliest appreciation; but the chief applause, for which the King gave the signal with conspicuous enthusiasm, was reserved for the three great pieces from "Lyre and Sword," which Weber had arranged for sixteen voices. The receipts from the concert were considerable; and on every side there were pleasure and contentment. Within a few days again, an invitation to give a concert in Augsburg took Weber over to that pleasant old town, where, according to the promise of his inviter,

"everything was so arranged that he had only to sit down and play;" but where, although applause was lavishly bestowed, receipts were scanty.

Other influences also were brought to bear to rouse the saddened artist from his deep depression, although vainly. In the Munich theatre one evening, at a performance of Schiller's "Maria Stuart," he had the pleasure of meeting the celebrated Rahel Varnhagen, who rallied him on his melancholy, which she chose to ascribe to the "boring effect of tragedy," and insisted on carrying him off the next evening to see a local farce, in company with Poissl and the learned Thiersch. The latter had just come back from Paris, whither he had been sent on a mission to reclaim the works of art of which Bavaria had been plundered by the invader.

That the cause of this unhappy state of mind was mainly to be attributed to Weber's distracting love-affairs, may be clearly deduced from his letters to his friend Gottfried Weber at this period. "I, who have laughed at love, and all I have heard of the passion, or seen described," he writes, "have now learned to comprehend the incomprehensible. . . . I was on the point of marrying; but I have been withheld from this step by my own prudence; still if she really loves me sufficiently to make a sacrifice, she may yet be my wife. . . . The mother was against me; for she saw she should lose her hold upon her daughter. On both sides we might have been unhappy; and so we have parted, convinced that a separation was for the best. But I love her still with the same heart,

the same deep love. . . . I look with terror to the time when my duties will necessarily compel my return to Prague, and I shall be daily forced to see the being I dare love no longer. . . . Now you can understand why I have been, in seeming, so dead to all. Yet, by heavens, my affection for you has ever been the same. . . . I must not dwell upon this subject. The remembrance of the past is too cruelly painful. I am so weak and nervous now, that I could put down my pen and weep." This wretched state could not last, however. Some degree of change came over the unhappy spirit of the young man; for not long afterwards he wrote again: "I am now at work upon my new Cantata, which I propose to send to the various sovereigns of Europe. The English Ambassador here will send it to the Prince Regent, and see that it is well translated into English. So you may guess how much I feel the importance of a work which may give me a world-wide fame. I am occupied on it day and night; and, thank heaven! during the last few days I have felt some of my old power coming back to me, with the consoling thought that I may yet be of some use in the world."

The poem of the Cantata, "Kampf und Sieg," had been by this time completed by Wohlbrück, and was in the composer's hands. To modern ideas there can be nothing less inspiring, it would seem, than Wohlbrück's formal verses, in which all true and living effect is deadened and destroyed by the intermixture of abstract allegorical personages with the realities of a battle-field. The reader of this cold

poem at the present day must fully imbue himself with the intellectual tendencies of the times, before he can in any way comprehend how it could possibly have inspired Weber to the composition of music of so much vigour and fire. And yet the composer's soul seems to have been roused. "The poem is admirable," he wrote to Caroline Brandt, "and fully worthy of the great occasion. May heaven bestow on me the power to give to the world my share of the work with equal greatness!" And again, to Rochlitz, he says, "The poem of my Cantata has the tendency most to be desired. Had it been a mere commonplace occasional poem, full of laudation of the heroes of the day, believe me I should never have touched it." "An admirable poem," he again calls it in one of his letters to Gottfried Weber; "which I must copy and send you at my first leisure hour. You will see!"

Three weeks at least elapsed before Weber, who, after his usual fashion, was working up his musical ideas for "Kampf und Sieg" in his head, could make up his mind to begin putting them upon paper. It was not until the 17th August that he wrote down the first of his series of pieces, the Chorus of People in D minor, No. 2. The next was the Warriors' Chorus in B, No. 8. And there he remained for awhile, his labours not being resumed until the 19th October, and only finished on the 11th December; although the time bestowed on the work altogether was in reality comprised in the space of four-and-twenty days. Yet never, as is evident from all his

letters and notices of the period, did he undertake any composition with a firmer will, and a more ardent desire to achieve a work of importance, and true to the spirit of the times, that might last to the world, and perhaps immortalise his name. He had every reason to have confidence in his own powers in the execution of the task. Had not its predecessor, composed to the words of Körner, been crowned with a surprising and inspiriting success? At the same time, the genius for dramatic form, which was always rife in him, sought to bestow upon the undramatic staff that peculiar scenic effect which was ever floating like a vision before his eyes. The feelings which inspired him on this occasion, and the means by which he worked them out, he published some months later in one of his literary notices. "Come what may," are the last words of this paper, "the gift was from above: the world may now judge it as it will." The world has judged long ago; and Weber's cantata of "Fight and Victory" has been acknowledged one of the greatest leaves in his whole wreath of fame.

During the latter portion of his stay in Munich, however, Weber may have been said to have been incapacitated from exercising his creative powers. True, a scena and air for the celebrated singer Frau Harlas, a concertino for the horn, and some other forgotten pieces, belong to this period. But the true energy of soul necessary to breathe the breath of life into his great cantata was dead within him. His relations with his beloved Caroline had begun to assume an aspect, which not only troubled his mind and

depressed his spirit, but filled him with the bitterest grief. Caroline had written to say that, the more she turned over in her mind the circumstances connected with the tie that bound them, the more she was convinced that it was for the happiness of them both it should be severed. Knowing well the pain that she would cause the man who loved her so dearly, she had for weeks endeavoured to prepare him for this separation, without finding the force to communicate her resolution. She had done so at last, she said, because he had announced his return to Prague as nigh at hand, and further delay was now impossible. Weber's despair was heart-breaking to witness. He was struck to the earth; and no force of will could raise him from his utter prostration. "Be not angry, my beloved one," he wrote to Caroline in his letter of farewell, "that I repeat my words of love and sorrow again and again. They flow from a pure heart, that knows no other wish than your happiness. When time shall have gone by, and you can look back in peace and quiet on the broken tie between us, you will then acknowledge that never was a truer heart than mine, and you will think of me, at least, with respect. . . . Thanks, my dearest life, my never-to-be-forgotten love, for the many sweet flowers you have woven into the garland of my life, for all your love, for all your care. Forgive me for my excess of love—forgive the passion that may have torn many a wound, when it should have soothed and healed—forgive me all the sorrow which I have caused you, and which now lies so heavy on my mind—though

heaven knows it was through no will of mine—forgive me for having stolen one whole sweet year of your precious life, for which I would willingly give ten of my own, could I but buy it back for you. This true heart can only think of you as it has always thought, as it will think of you eternally. But do you forget as you forgive. When once again you are free and happy, then only give a thought to your poor Carl. Farewell—farewell."

It may be well divined amidst what a tumult of harassing feelings, under these unhappy circumstances, Weber found himself once more in Prague, where he arrived on the 7th September. It was evening; and without waiting for a moment's repose, Weber hurried, in a state of wild agitation, to the theatre. Caroline was on the stage, singing the "Aschenbrödel" (Cinderella), a part in which she exercised an irresistible spell of enchantment over every heart. The unhappy lover looked on for a moment, but his rising tears nigh choked him; and he rushed out of the theatre. He reached home again utterly prostrated. It may be looked upon as a blessing for the poor man, in this sad struggle of his soul, that his old friend Hans Gänsbacher happened to be in Prague, where he was seeking up recruits for the band of a Jäger batallion in the Tyrol. To this fortunate circumstance may be ascribed the fact that Weber was enabled to bear up against his hard lot with some degree of courage, at least in outward seeming. The duties of his office naturally brought him into frequent contact with the

woman he had lost, but still loved so fondly; but he found strength to assume the semblance of common-place regard. Caroline, on her own side, was far less able to bear up. The real affection she cherished for her lover, which had been crushed, in fancy only, by the cold prudential counsels, the detractions, the back-bitings, and the female tittle-tattle, which had never ceased to assail her during his absence, burst forth again at the sight of him. Her feminine vanity may have been piqued also by his apparent well-studied calm. All the trammels of her resolve were broken. It soon became impossible for her not to show that, beneath the warmth of love, every cold consideration had melted away. Weber, meanwhile, used all his power to master the feelings, the demoralising effect of which Gänsbacher's true friendship so clearly placed before him. He occupied himself with all his energies to restore the condition of the opera, which had again miserably fallen back in Clement's incapable hands. He worked night and day. He hoped to forget. But it was clear matters could not last thus.

It was on a fine autumn afternoon that Weber consented to accept, with his friend Gänsbacher, an invitation from manager Liebich, whose new house was situated some little way beyond the gates of the city, in picturesque solitude, and was called "The Sentinel," from the fact of a soldier being painted as large as life upon its gate. The two friends found a large party assembled, in which artists of the theatre mingled, in the pleasantest sociability, with members of the highest society in Prague. Caroline

Brandt was present of course: she was the favourite, the darling, the spoiled-child of all. Here at last the lovers met face to face. After a moment's trembling hesitation, they looked into each other's eyes. Somehow their hands were clasped together; and thus the tie was once more bound, never to be sundered more. After all the storms, there was a sudden burst of sunshine. Weber's happiness was restored.

Back then to work went Weber with another spirit stirring afresh within him. His first care was to correct the defects which had crept, during his absence, into the conduct of the opera, and to resume his position in a manner worthy of himself and the public. He resolved to give a work, good in itself, and requiring care and delicacy of treatment. But in this resolve he was considerably guided by the bias of friendship. He fixed upon young Mayerbeer's opera of "Alimalek," given in Vienna under the title of "The Two Caliphs," and known under other names in various parts of Germany. Upon this work the young composer had lavished all his talent, all his science. But Weber had already learned, to his sorrow, from his friends the Beers in Berlin, that the success of this opera had there been small indeed. The critics had attacked it cruelly, declaring all its originality affected, its chief characteristic the commonest commonplace, its effects utterly without melody. But Weber opined that, by careful preparation and representation of the work, he might bring it forward in so worthy a manner, as to render a service, not only to his friend and himself, but to the public. In order

to give the public beforehand a thorough comprehension of the style and manner of the young master, he wrote and published, in a local paper, a detailed critical notice of the work; the first of the long series he was afterwards wont to give to the world on similar occasions. The intention was an excellent one; and one moreover which Weber always defended. Whether such a proceeding, however, was correct in judgment is another question; and certainly it has opened the way, by its example, for a host of other unworthy scribblers. Nothing was omitted by Weber, at all events, that could secure a faultless representation of his friend's work. All his talent, industry, and zeal were lavished upon it. The principal parts were placed in the best hands; and so content was Weber, generally so difficult to please, with his own share of the work, that in his diary he wrote, "What a blessing, were all works placed in hands as faithful, and tended with as true a love!"

The representation took place, after the unusual number of eighteen rehearsals, on the 22d October. In spite of all, the opera failed to please. The fine musical technicalities of the work were not understood by the public. The effect was cold. All Weber's trouble was vain: he had been deceived in his anticipations. He had "learned a lesson," he wrote, but was "awfully angry" over it. Further representations of Mayerbeer's opera, on which the capellmeister insisted, in spite of the manager's opposition, were far more favourably received by the public of Prague; and then, and then only, the trusty friend

wrote to congratulate young Mayerbeer on the representation of his opera.

The happy change which had now come over Weber's mind, although he was still restless and dissatisfied with his position in Prague, is fully expressed in a letter to Rochlitz, dated the 7th November 1815. "My mind is more at peace," he wrote; "I can work again now; and I employ on my compositions all the few hours I can snatch from my duties. But the worst of it is, that, day after day, I never can be quiet for any length, and only swallow, as fast as I can, the broken scraps of time I may pick up. Scarcely do I warm to my work, when I must be up and away; and nothing can be more prejudicial to true effect in a great work like my cantata. My determination to leave Prague is unchanged; although as yet a secret. The only pleasure—the only reward I obtain from my present position lie in my power to show that unrecognised excellence needs only to be well set forth to be properly honoured." This latter remark is in evident allusion to his production of Mayerbeer's opera.

Spite of the hindrances to work, over which Weber laments in one portion of this letter, and the exertion necessary under the circumstances, he evidently must have strained his genius, far more than was good for him probably, to complete the work, interrupted by his long unhappy state of mind, but which he had so much at heart. He even went through a weary course of preparatory study previously to the composition of the great fugue of his

finale. He felt how necessary it was to produce his work before the excitement, attendant on the late victories, had wholly evaporated; and his benefit concert, fixed for the 22d December, he determined should witness the completion of his cantata for representation. He spurred his genius on. An iron will supported him. As has been before stated, by the 11th December the whole cantata was completed. In getting up the music, the love and regard with which Weber inspired all who knew him, was displayed in the most touching proofs. Not only every member of the operatic company, but all the noble dilettanti who played in the orchestra, were ready to perform the smallest services, or to undertake the greatest trouble, in order to forward their dear young composer's interests. After as few as four rehearsals, Weber declared the cantata to be ready for production. The concert took place on the 22d December. The day could not have been more unfavourable. The Christmas festivities were absorbing general attention. Weber's "evil genius" was again astir. The rain poured down in torrents; hurricanes of wind swept the streets. Walking was impossible; and the parties which were taking place absorbed the carriages. The hall of the Redoute was but scantily garnished in consequence; and all the earlier portion of the concert passed off before a cold and sulky public. The words of the poem were declaimed, in order to give a better comprehension of the work; yet still the public was indifferent. But when the cantata was given—admirably performed it was—

this indifference was speedily changed into enthusiasm, at least such enthusiasm as a public of Prague could show. The effect was magnificent. The success which attended the efforts of the master to combine a musical picture of great events with the stirring feelings those events had aroused, was recognised at once. Equally applauded by the more cultivated portion of the audience were the tact and talent with which the composer had avoided all the customary effects of the clash of arms, the thunder of the cannon, the cries of the wounded, and such commonplace resources, whilst bestowing a general dramatic effect, which swept on victoriously. The introduction of the various national airs was declared to be as clever as effective; and all hearts were irresistibly carried away by the wonderful contrast afforded in the solemn prayer of the allied armies during the wild stormy march of the French troops, and the advance of the Prussian Jäger followed by the simple and sublime strains of "God save the King!" The applause, which burst from every part of the room, was of such a spontaneous and heartfelt kind, that not for a moment could Weber doubt of the genuine greatness of his creation. At the conclusion General Nostitz, who had played so decisive a part in the battle of Leipsic, walked up to the young composer, and said, in allusion to Beethoven's "Battle of Vittoria," which had lately been produced, "In Beethoven's music boys play at soldiers; in yours, sir, we have heard the voices of nations." After all his troubles, all his sorrows, all his misgivings, Weber

was satisfied in his inmost heart. The concert moreover, in spite of the prejudicial influence of the little "evil genius," was crowned by a considerable pecuniary success. The year, too, which now closed—the year 1815—had added most materially to the struggling artist's resources. His receipts had amounted to about 10,000 florins Viennese; and he had the joy of paying off thereby a great portion of his Stuttgart debts, all of which were at last liquidated in the February of the ensuing year.

Still, however, Weber held to his determination to give up his situation at Prague, and either prosecute his long-dreamed artistic tour, or accept some other position, superior in consideration, and more sympathetic to himself, than that which he now occupied. But the more his intention became known, the more his friends at Prague seemed to recognise his worth, and to exert themselves to make his life agreeable to him. In the houses of the principal nobles his society was more and more sought. Fine ladies and gentlemen fought for him in their festive entertainments. The idea of his departure had a powerful effect also on his beloved's mind. Her demonstrations of affection and regard became evidently more spontaneous and more warmly expressed. She testified a sincere commiseration for his loneliness, and in order to secure him a greater sense of homeishness and comfort, induced her mother to allow him to board at her house. His nervous system was soon remarkably strengthened—his spirit freshened and revived; and a portion of that bright, merry, almost

reckless humour, which had once characterised the genial artist, but of which the latter unhappy circumstances of his life and the pressure of his late years of bondage had robbed him, now came back to him. With this return of life, returned also his love of life and life's enjoyments. Once more he had the spirit to find pleasure in the bright scenes around him. The masked balls of the Carnival once more lured him to their revels; and many a merry masquerade jest, to which he was accustomed, in after days, to revert with almost childish delight, was invented and executed under the influence of his clever geniality. Of all these masked balls, those given by Manager Liebich, in which the most exclusive aristocracy of the city mingled joyously and unconstrainedly with actors, artists, men of science, and men of wealth, were the most distinguished for their originality and unfailing merriment. For these Weber composed many an inspiriting waltz, the memory of which still lingers in old heads and old hearts, although these dances have been lost to the world. One of the many clever inventions devised at this time by Weber was a complete "Masque," in the ancient sense of the word, representing the "Death of the Carnival," at which the musicians had their instruments covered with crape, Caroline Brandt, as a charming young Columbine, was borne upon a bier by sorrowing Harlequins, Pierrots followed as female mourners, and Weber himself appeared as Death beside the dying Carnival, with the words "Eating, drinking, dancing, are no more," upon his scythe,

accompanied by a variety of symbolical personages.

Spite of all this rebirth of joyous spirit, however, Weber clung to his resolve. The rumour of this determination smote the good Liebich to the heart. With tears in his eyes he anxiously asked Weber whether it were true; and, when the young capellmeister answered in the affirmative, he entreated the cherished artist not to forsake him, with such affecting remonstrance, that the resolution became a hard one. There is reason to suppose that Weber might have given way to the supplications of his old friend, or at least have retained his functions for another year, had not a circumstance occurred which confirmed him in his purpose. A change had taken place in the presidency of the theatre; and in a memorial, forwarded to Liebich by the new president, Weber read to his surprise and bitter grief that, after all the frequent acknowledgments of his services which he had received, dissatisfaction was expressed with the conduct of the Opera since the year 1812. Weber's determination to give up his post was now irrevocably fixed. In his turn he addressed a memorial to Liebich, which was doubtless intended for communication to the higher powers. In this able and wholly unprejudiced paper the young capellmeister gave a detailed account of all his services, of his untiring zeal, of the duties he had undertaken in the interests of the theatre, of his exertions, which had cost him his health and nigh his life; but with a plain simple-minded truth, a modesty, and an

honesty of purpose, which, deeply and justly wounded as he was, do the highest honour to his gentlemanly feeling and temper. The old days of irritability at wounded vanity, fostered by Franz Anton, were now flown. One sentence alone, and that not misplaced, displays the wound received. "Did my detractors think," he writes, "that I was a second musical Prometheus to form singers out of clay? But if public opinion is thus to be expressed, I can unfortunately only draw the conclusion that, if Prague is able to add to a well-earned reputation, it never is to elevate it." "Should the dissatisfaction expressed," he says in conclusion, "ever reach those, whose respect and contentment can be my only reward, my purpose would have wholly failed; and I should never be able to meet the expectations of the judicious. Better it is then, with the consolation still in my heart that I have fully done my duty with unfailing zeal, that I should beg you to place at the head of the Opera, as soon as possible, a man better capable of satisfying the demands that may be made upon him." Immediately after this memorial Weber sent in his formal resignation of his post, to the duties of which he had sacrificed three years and a half of the best period of his life. He was pained to the heart to find that all his exertions, all his sacrifices, had been in vain. For the first time, a truth, which in every step of his career thereafter was held before his eyes as a permanent warning, struck him powerfully. He learned, by the example of Columbus, of Galileo, of so many other mighty spirits, the important lesson, that the

greatest aspirations are of no avail when recognition fails. Yet from this moment he established for himself a principle, which, throughout life, he was wont to repeat incessantly. "Examine thy heart thrice, and ask whether thou doest right, before thou lookest for the approval of thy superiors." "With such a principle," he would say, "a man may become great, and, at all events, will be honest and true, although he may renounce all hope of interest from those above him." That such expressions were in apparent contradiction to Weber's well-known respect for the judgment and countenance of personages of rank and position it cannot be denied; but with him the worship of power and greatness was but an artistic homage to the living personification of ideal qualities with which his fancy loved to decorate the high ones of the earth.

It was with something of this feeling that, in the spring of 1816, he had elegant and handsomely bound copies made of his cantata, "Kampf und Sieg," which he sent, through the mediation of persons of influence and note, to the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, the Prince Regent of England, the Kings of Holland, Saxony, Bavaria, and Denmark, and other sovereign princes. Mingled with the feeling, however, there was doubtless also the desire to spread his name and fame in other lands. It was the custom of the time, moreover, to lay such works of art at princely feet; and no artist thought himself humiliated by the acceptance of snuff-boxes, rings, orders, or similar acknowledgments in return. Pre-

sents of snuff-boxes and jewelry of every kind came also to Weber in rich store; and many a time, on high days and holidays, in years to come, were they spread out to amuse his little boy, who looked on the treasures with wonder and delight, as evidences of the truth of the charming fairy tales his father loved to tell him.

The events of this period of Weber's sojourn in Prague were few, and not of any peculiarly exciting nature. His wounded feelings, and determination to renounce his post, diminished nothing of his zeal in the execution of his duties. Opera after opera was studied, rehearsed, and produced with as much care and love for his art, as if his heart had still been in his thankless task. Among others was the "Athalia" of his friend Poissl in Munich, with the great beauties of which opera Weber was manifestly much impressed, and which he had the pleasure of seeing appreciated by his usually cold public. One little incident of his life was the arrival of the celebrated pianist and composer, Nepomuck Hummel. Weber received him with every honour, introduced him into all the aristocratic houses of Prague, and helped to arrange his concert with zeal and true artistic sympathy. In writing to Gottfried Weber on the subject, the composer thus expressed himself about his illustrious rival: "His best qualities consist in his wonderful neatness of execution, his brilliancy, and his great powers of endurance. But apparently he has never studied deeply the true nature of the instrument. He cannot play an adagio. Generally he astounds by his rapid passages. But even these are of a com-

monplace order, as if he feared to dare a novelty. He has the public with him, however; and so far he does right. He is a thorough representative of the Vienna school of execution; but he is a capital simple-minded fellow, without any pretention or affectation. His last composition, a septett, is admirably written; but his concertos are very old-fashioned in form."

A change was to come. On sending his cantata of "Kampf und Sieg" to the King of Prussia, Weber had begged that monarch for permission to be allowed to give a representation of this, his last composition, at the Opera House of Berlin, on the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and for the benefit of the invalided soldiers. The permission was granted; and Count Carl von Brühl transmitted to Weber the royal assent. But, about the same time, he received also the announcement that the hopes he had entertained of an appointment at Berlin must be at an end. In spite of all Count von Brühl's zealous intercession in Weber's favour, Bernhard Romberg had been installed in the vacant post of musical director. There can be no doubt, from all that can be learned from the most trustworthy sources, that it was precisely Weber's composition of this great cantata of victory, which had most militated against his acceptance in Prussian service. It is a well-known fact, that the King was surrounded by advisers who had no desire to see any individuals, who had in any way taken any share in the great work of a nation's freedom, either by word or deed, distinguished by especial favour, or permitted to approach the throne. The

King himself was notoriously in no wise kindly disposed to such men; and this fact was in itself sufficient to render the appointment of Weber "undesirable." Brühl's efforts had been of no avail against the hostile influences which were brought to bear upon his application; and he himself, rather than compromise the court party, which had led the intrigue, felt himself obliged, rather to the disgust of Weber, even to speak of Romberg's appointment with complacency.

The performance of the cantata had been permitted, however; and on the 5th June, Weber started for Berlin, for the purpose of conducting the rehearsals of his work, accompanied by young Freytag the pianist, who had been studying under him for some time past, and who, according to Weber's judgment, was, after Julius Benedict, one of the most talented of his pupils. This promising young artist died early. On his passage through Dresden, Weber found a letter awaiting him, begging him to come over to Pillnitz, where Count Vitzthum, equerry-in-chief to the king of Saxony, had a communication to make to him. Weber obeyed; and from the Count he received, in the King's name, a valuable gold snuff-box in return for his cantata. Little did he think that this casual interview would present him to a man who was afterwards indirectly to exercise so important an influence upon his destiny.

Berlin was reached on the 9th; and once more was Weber received with friendship and affection into the house of his friend Mayerbeer's parents, who now lived in a splendid villa in the Thiergarten, and

who always had a home to offer to their beloved Carl Maria. And a sweet home indeed he found in his quiet chamber, looking out upon gardens and green trees, in which an admirable piano had been provided for him. In Berlin Weber was again in the midst of many old and cherished friends. Another was to be added to the list. One evening, at the house of Gubitz, a singular-looking individual entered the room in the midst of a tremendous thunder-storm. Strange to say, it was by the glare of the lightning flashes, that Weber recognised his extraordinary acquaintance of the inn at Bamberg in the year 1811. "This man," he writes to Caroline Brandt, "was Hoffmann, the author of the Phantasie-stücke. The effect was very singular. It is true that there is the look of a little demon gleaming at all times in his face. He has written a new work called the Devil's Elixir; and he has given me the first part to read." In mentioning this curious circumstance to Rochlitz, he writes again, "Apropos, have you read the Phantasie-stücke? and what do you think of the book? To my mind there is much that is admirable in it—a rich but somewhat exuberant fancy; but, if I may be pardoned saying so, a want of all settled purpose in the carrying out of the whole. The perusal has awakened in me the desire to take up again my own "Artist's Wanderings;" and, every now and then, I sketch a page or two. But I cannot write alone. I want a friend on whose judgment I can rely, and whose approbation would encourage me. Would I could conjure you to my side!"

Spite of Weber's disappointment in his expectations of a permanent position in Berlin, he found himself well treated by fortune in other respects. One of his great desires had been to obtain a "starring" engagement in Berlin for Caroline Brandt. Brühl, anxious to please him in all he could, soon arranged the affair. Mademoiselle Brandt was engaged to appear in six parts, at a remuneration of ten louis-d'or each performance—a very high salary for those days. "You ought to be pleased with your commissioner," wrote the happy lover, "and be aware you owe him several good extra busses on his return." Weber could but be pleased also to find his reputation increasing daily. "All goes well with me here," he wrote again. "The respect and consideration I receive on all sides are so great, that they sometimes quite confuse me. Wouldn't the Praguers open their eyes and stare to see how an artist is honoured here!"

Theatrical influences likewise were no longer adverse to Weber in Berlin. Protected by the powerful ægis of Brühl, he found every hindrance swept away, and his path smooth before him. The rehearsals of his cantata thus commenced without impediment. The very first of the series gave such a high opinion of the work to the orchestra, that its members, on their dispersal, trumpeted forth their unbounded admiration far and wide. On the second and third rehearsals, it was found difficult to prevent the entrance of the crowd of musical men of every description, who were desirous of studying the work before its first performance. The last general re-

hearsal was a veritable triumph. Orchestra and singers played and sang with unbounded enthusiasm. At every pause, the musical men, and influential personages, who thronged the theatre, crowded upon the stage to wish the composer joy, and express their ardent admiration; and, at the conclusion, the musicians laid down their instruments to join in the universal applause. Bernhard Anselm Weber, true to his ancient hostility, had done all he could to destroy the effect of the "young puppy's" forthcoming composition by the production of Beethoven's "Battle of Vittoria," a short time before. But his intention utterly failed. Spite of his clever arrangement of the instruments so as to modify the noisy effect of the composition, the nervous public of Berlin expressed its horror of the "awful row," refused to take to the work of the great master, and was only made all the more anxious to learn how Weber had treated a similar subject.

But, though one enemy had failed, the "evil star" had taken better measures to damp the eagerly expected performance. Such fearful storms of rain came down on the evening fixed for the execution of the cantata, that the theatre was only half filled; and Weber was all the more mortified as the receipts were destined to a charitable purpose. Brühl had done his best. He had caused the theatre to be brilliantly illuminated in honour of the composer, and with the intention of giving an unusually festive character to the whole performance. But the result was still a striking one. "First and foremost, my beloved

life," wrote Weber to Caroline the following day, "I must tell you of the brilliant success of last night. Bernhard Anselm's overture was played in solemn silence. Then came my patriotic songs, which created so much uproar that "Lutzow's Wilde Jagd" had to be repeated—an unheard of event in the Berlin Opera House. Then came my cantata, which was admirably executed both by orchestra and singers, and excited the wildest enthusiasm. I thought that at the point where "God save the King" is introduced after the battle, the applause would never find an end. The King dispatched Count Brühl to me directly, to tell me how deeply moved he had been, and that he desired to hear it once more. So, *nolens volens*, I must remain here a few days longer, and repeat the work next week. I can scarcely doubt of the success of this second performance, as the enthusiasm was general, and so many people rushed on the stage to congratulate me, that I was nigh crushed by the eager crowd of my admirers."

This second concert was arranged. But the "evil star" had not sufficiently gratified its malice yet. Weber tells his own tale of the cause of this new spite of fate. "Yesterday," he writes, "I had begun to make my arrangements for my concert, when about mid-day came the news, that the world-wide celebrated singer Catalani was about to arrive in Berlin. The mischief to me cannot but be great. Every body will be saving-up his money to hear the great Catalani; and the tickets will cost at least a louis-d'or a-piece." On all sides Weber was now

entreated to postpone his concert until the Catalani mania should have somewhat cooled down. All foresaw that the enchantress would lure every coin out of the pockets of the easily inflamed Berliners. But Weber was determined, and held good to the day which he had fixed, and which came very shortly before the great Catalani concert. He was not to be daunted. It was not without sparks of pleasant humour that he wrote an account of the result to his beloved. "It was the old story, sweet. The previous day, the weather had been glorious. The sun rose on the morning of my concert in unclouded splendour.' But in the afternoon, down came the pouring rain again; and all my hopes were soused. After all, however, the concert was not so very bad. There is no doubt that the Catalani fever lowered my pulse to the tune of at least 100 louis-d'or; but I was grateful to get off without a loss, the expenses having been so heavy. The applause once more was tremendous . . . and I had every reason to be delighted with the genuine enthusiasm and the devotion shown me." "Yesterday," he writes again, exhausted with the tokens of admiration lavished upon him, "I received a letter from the members of the chorus, which greatly touched me. They, one and all, refuse to receive any remuneration for their services, considering themselves honoured by taking a part in my composition, and fully repaid by my satisfaction. . . . I was presented to the Queen of Holland, who overwhelmed me with encomiums upon my cantata. This was at a concert at Prince Rad-

ziwill's, where I had the delight of hearing the celebrated Catalani."

So great had been the success of these concerts, and so friendly the manner of the King to Weber at his audience to take leave, that his hopes were raised of obtaining the permission to bear at least an official title, as Chamber-Composer to his Majesty, the King of Prussia. Weber was never one of those artists who affect to feel contempt for any distinction of the kind; on the contrary, he was always ready to recognise the value of a designation, which was of advantage to him in the society with which he mixed as an artist, and which, in his artistic tours, materially advanced his interests. A memorial on the subject was consequently presented to the King by his ardent admirer and friend, Count von Brühl. The application was rejected, as contrary to the custom of the Prussian Court. Brühl, nothing daunted, again addressed the King in the hopes of obtaining for Weber at least the honorary title of "Capellmeister." But once more a negative answer was returned. The bestowal of such a title, it was said, might awaken expectations, which were not intended to be realised. Brühl was still anxious to persist, and to negotiate further; but Weber himself entreated him to take no further steps, and left Berlin, happy, as he wrote, in the conviction that his purpose was not unfulfilled, even though princes might not bestow honours on him.

On his return to Prague, Weber had resolved to make a short stay at Carlsbad: and to that celebra-

ted bathing place he travelled in company with the old banker, Beer, and his youngest son, Hans. On his way through Leipsic, he was offered the direction of the opera in that town, upon highly liberal terms, by Küstner, the newly appointed manager of the theatre; but this offer Weber declined; he was resolved to attach himself no more to any establishment which, in its practical working, was but a private speculation. There is no record extant to show precisely what were the reasons of Weber's visit to Carlsbad at this juncture; but there can be little doubt, to judge from the sequel, that he had been induced to take this journey in consequence of what had passed in his interview with the royal equerry, Von Vitzthum, on the occasion of the presentation of the snuff-box from the King of Saxony. Court Marshal Count Heinrich Vitzthum, the brother, was the royal director of the theatre of Dresden, and was then staying at Carlsbad; and there, in truth, Weber seems to have been in immediate communication with him. The pretext, given by the Count for seeking Weber, appears to have been originally the mere engagement of a tenor singer; but it is amply apparent that he was much struck with the young capellmeister, and felt the advantage which would accrue from securing him for the German Opera, which was about to be organised at Dresden. To his brother, who had assumed the duties of his post during his absence, Count Heinrich Vitzthum wrote at once from Carlsbad, telling of the offers he had made to Weber to undertake the post of capellmeister at Dresden, and

of his great desire to secure him. Weber seems to have hesitated a little time relative to the terms of such an engagement. But it is clear, from further letters, that all was arranged satisfactorily between the parties, and that a contract was entered into, subject, of course, to royal approval. One passage in Count Heinrich Vitzthum's letters to his brother on the subject of the great advantages likely to be bestowed by Weber on the German opera, is sufficiently remarkable. "It is the general feeling," he writes, "among all musical men and artists here, as well as in public opinion, that Saxony ought now more than ever to avail itself of all the resources in its power to attain an exceptional position in its cultivation of the arts and sciences, since all hope of earning itself name and fame in any other direction is now lost to it for ever." There is no doubt that Dresden was then in position to till that rich field of art of which Munich some years later bore off the harvest. Of all the cities of Germany it was the richest in treasures of art, the most alluring by the charm of its position, the most progressive in outward improvements. At that time, it might incontestably have been made the intellectual focus of all Germany, and the arena where the great spirits of the day might have striven for the palm of honour, and attracted the attention and regard of entire Europe. During the negotiations with Count Vitzthum, Weber meanwhile had been enjoying, by the side of the health-bringing springs of Carlsbad, the society of some of his choicest friends, among whom were his

old allies the Wieberkings from Munich. But the arrangements, which opened to him new prospects of an important career, once concluded, he could but feel that duty called him back to Prague; and to Prague he journeyed on.

On his return, Weber found the affairs of the theatre in sad confusion. Poor old Liebich—"Papa" Liebich, as he was so truly called—had entered on the last stage of the painful disease, from which he had so long suffered, and was lying on that bed from which he would never rise. His death was expected about the same time as the termination of Weber's engagement; and the stage was soon destined to lose its two most genial supporters. Frau Liebich, who conducted the affairs during her husband's illness, was little loved; her temper was bad—her manner intolerably imperious. The arrangement of affairs, before surrendering the post into the hands of the successor, called likewise for a constant strain upon Weber's attention; and thus it came to pass, that unanimity of feeling was lost in the company, and the performances visibly deteriorated. Weber was falsely accused of openly neglecting the duties of the position he was so soon to leave; when in truth he was still working hard to produce the best effect in his power with his weakened means. Operas were studied and produced with as much energy and care as ever. Mayerbeer's "Alimelek" was given on the occasion of the visit of his parents, to their intense delight and satisfaction. Above all, Weber restored to the stage Spohr's great opera of "Faust," which had first been produced

at Prague. This opera had seized on Weber's fancy, not only on account of its own intrinsic beauties, but of the principle on which the overture had been composed. This principle, by which an overture is made an expounder of the feelings of the whole opera, and yet an independent instrumental work, was followed by Weber in all his later operas. The difficulties of carrying it out seemed at first almost insurmountable; but with what geniality he has solved the problem in such overtures as those of "Der Freischütz," "Perciosa," "Euryanthe," and "Oberon," all the world now knows.

As may be well understood, every effort was made by Frau Liebich to induce Weber to remain. When all these endeavours could not succeed, she entreated him to designate his successor. He commenced negotiations consequently with Methfessel, a man for whom he bore a great esteem; but, on discovering that, even before his last illness, Liebich had made overtures to Triebensee, he withdrew from any further prosecution of his intention. In this distracted state of affairs, he could but condole with his successor, whoever he was to be; and nothing can give a greater proof of Weber's kindness of heart, and consideration for others, as well as of his attachment to the establishment, by which he stood so long, than the manner in which he prepared all for the unfortunate winner of the prize, which he relinquished. Not only did he classify and arrange all the books, contracts, and general archives of the opera; the detailed *mises en scène*, the catalogues of scenery, dresses,

and "properties," for every piece; but he wrote long notices of his plans, and suggestions for the forthcoming operas to be produced; of the chief characteristics of each member of the company; of the system of organisation which he had instituted, as much apart from the old-fashioned bureaucratic red-tape-ism, as from looseness and carelessness of management; as well as useful remarks on the nature and tendencies of the Prague public. For this excess of zeal and labour, no call was made upon him by the strict requirements of his duty. But Weber was animated by his love of art, his old ties of attachment, above all by a noble conscientiousness. That in this absorbing increase of business, Weber displayed but little productiveness is easily comprehensible; but highly characteristic of his genius was the fact, that his wonderful adagio of his sonata in A flat was entirely conceived and worked out in his head, whilst he thus sat in his gloomy room in the theatre, surrounded by dusty documents and mouldering account-books.

It was with a thoroughly clear conscience that Weber was enabled to give up the duties of the post he had filled with zeal and energy for so many years. It was not without a heavy heart and a deep sense of oppression, however, that he formally laid his resignation in the hands of the directress. With still profounder sorrow did he stand by the death-bed of his old friend Liebich, now too far gone for any strong expression of feeling, whilst his young capellmeister's heart was overflowing with bitterness. And sad

was the moment when, on the 7th October, the whole body of the company, from orchestra and stage, from high to low, from leading singers and first tragedians to carpenters, thronged round his carriage with broken voices and tears in their eyes to sob to him a farewell. But Caroline was by his side. She was to travel with him, accompanied by her mother, to Berlin, to commence the starring engagement which Weber had there prepared for her.

Weber's reception in Berlin formed a striking contrast to his cool dismissal from Prague; and he himself could not but feel delighted to witness the astonishment with which his beloved "Lina" and her mother stood by and saw the marks of respect, admiration, and attachment showered upon him. Carl Maria had never appeared to his beloved with such a halo of light around him. For the first time she felt how small was her own artistic sphere compared with that of the composer. The position accorded to Weber in the great world of Berlin made a powerful and most pleasurable impression on both mother and daughter; and thus when, one evening on returning from a party, where the greatest homage had been done him, Weber took his Lina's hand and entreated her permission to announce their engagement publicly, both the ladies were inclined to welcome as a boon from heaven the offer, which but a few months previously they had hesitated to accept.

Weber had presented his beloved in the houses of all his friends; and he, on his own side, was enchanted with the magic charm which his Lina's grace, amia-

bility, and intellectual advantages exercised on the hearts of all who approached her. Every where was she received with kindness and regard. Her own share in these attentions may be ascribed to the fact that all Weber's friends were already aware of the little secret, which was no longer one, and welcomed his beloved with the affection they bore himself. Upon Brühl also, and the eminent members of the Berlin company of the day, Weber saw with joy that Caroline had made the most favourable impression. All held out the hand to her; for she fascinated all. When at last she made her first appearance as "Gurli" in the "Indianer in England," her success was instantaneous. In a few days all Berlin rang with the praises of the charms and talent of "the little Brandt." Never was "starring" engagement crowned with greater success; although the critics of Berlin seem to have laid more store by her graceful and *naïf* acting than by her singing. Weber was all the more delighted, as her appearance was to be the last in Berlin; and his artistic soul was naturally anxious that as artist also she should leave an indelible impression on the public of the Prussian capital. At last one afternoon, at a little festive party organised by Lichtenstein, who had lately married, the blushing girl consented to Weber's wish. By a strange symbolical coincidence—a coincidence which Weber failed not to feel—a total eclipse of the sun had been taking place; and, at the moment when Weber rose and announced his engagement to Caroline Brandt, the sun again shone forth in its full glory. All his

friends who were present hailed the glad news with the wildest acclamations. And thus the die was cast. The loving pair had proved each other—learned to know each other. In trust and confidence they clasped each other's hands; and death alone was now to sunder them.

On the 20th November, Caroline Brandt left Berlin to fulfil a further engagement, which Weber had arranged for her with Count Vitzthum in Dresden. Happy in the thought that he was now bound in love and affection for life to one loving and beloved being, Weber returned to his labours, and endeavoured to withdraw himself as much as possible from society. That he laboured hard was very evident. In the few ensuing weeks he produced two of his most charming Lieder, "Die Gefangenen" and "Die frien Sänger," completed his admirable sonata in A flat, wrote the greater portion of his "Duo Concertante," and his great sonata in D minor, composed a "Divertimento" for piano and guitar, and lastly a great scena and aria at Count Brühl's desire, to be inserted in Cherubini's "Lodoiska" for the favourite prima donna Milder. But from the fact of his engagement with "the fascinating little Brandt," Weber had become more than ever an object of public attraction. He could not wholly avoid the invitations, which poured in upon him more than ever, to mingle in society. One important result of his appearance in the world was his acquaintance with Ludwig Devrient, the greatest actor of his day. This celebrated man came to the house of Hoffmann, who was reading

to a choice circle of friends the book of his opera of "Undine," which was shortly to be produced. Devrient was even then a shattered man, nervous and ailing; he did not remain long, but rose and went out suddenly, as the reading "bored" him. Tales have been since told of vigils and revels between Devrient, Hoffmann, and Weber, which are wholly without foundation. Weber was no longer the man to give himself up to such orgies; and moreover his intercourse with Devrient was never frequent. Hoffmann's "Undine" interested him much. "My expectations," he wrote to his Caroline, "were at fever pitch. I thought the music full of character and effect. I was pleased; and I enjoyed the whole. Indeed I was so impressed, that, immediately after the theatre, I rushed to Hoffmann to express my sympathy and congratulations." In the midst of his musical creations, Weber's literary productiveness was not in abeyance. His musical notices for various periodicals were manifold at the same time. "I am so tired with sitting, so confused with thinking," he wrote to his beloved, "that my head is in a whirl. But there is joy, excitement, hope for the future in my heart."

Meanwhile, however, the proposed appointment of Weber as Capellmeister to the German Opera at Dresden had not been neglected by Count Vitzthum. He had addressed a memorial in Weber's favour to the Cabinet Minister Count Einsiedel, and had received a cool and curt answer in return, to the effect that "all arrangements for a German Opera were in

too crude a state to admit of any thought of such appointments." But the Count was not thus to be turned from his purpose. Memorials again were presented by him arguing against any objections or necessity for delay in the organisation of the German opera. He took every occasion to prepare not only the feeling at court, but public opinion for the execution of his plan. His activity and his correspondence with Weber were incessant. At length the affair of the appointment was made to resolve itself into a matter of amount of salary; hampered, moreover, with the condition that the engagement was to subsist for one year only. After a little demurring, Weber consented to the proposed arrangement, although, as he wrote with pain, but the strictest truth, to Count Vitzthum, "without any security for the future, it would be almost impossible to effect any really important results." Anxious, in case the negotiations in this important matter should come to no favourable result, to prosecute his long-cherished plan of a great artistic tour, Weber pressed for a speedy decision. It came at last. The establishment of the German Opera was resolved upon by the King; and Count Vitzthum was enabled to address Weber as "Capellmeister to his Majesty the King of Saxony."

It was on Christmas morning 1816 that Weber was greeted by the letter confirming his appointment. "What a joyful Christmas-box!" he exclaimed. At the same time came two other Christmas-boxes also—a costly ring from the King of Hanover, and a splen-

did snuff-box from the King of Bavaria, in return for his great cantata. "Long did I look on Count Vitzthum's letter, without daring to open it," he wrote to his beloved. "Was it joy? was it sorrow? At length I took courage. It was joy! So round I went to all my friends, who laughed, and made the new Royal Capellmeister the most reverential bows. I must fig myself out now in true court style. Perhaps I ought to wear a pigtail to please the Dresdeners! What do you think? I ought to have an extra kiss from you for this good news."

Thus shortly after his matrimonial engagement Weber found himself in a position of distinction and honour, in which he could secure the comfort and happiness of her he loved. At last the rays of fortune's sun seemed to extinguish the dusky baneful light of his old "evil star."

END OF VOL. I.

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